Parish Evangelism

FREDERICK L. FAGLEY

LIBRARY
EVANGELICAL SCHOOL
OF THEOLOGY

Gift of

Rev. Norman E. Lettra

Parish Evangelism

Parish Evangelism

An Outline of a Year's Program

By

FREDERICK L. FAGLEY

Executive Secretary the Commission on Evangelism of the National Council of Congregational Churches

Introduction by

CHARLES L. GOODELL, D.D.

Of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

LIBRARY OF
United Theological Semina
BV
3790
.F28
1926
43,016

NEW YORK CHICAGO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

10225

The Evangelical
School of Theology

255
F

Copyright, 1921, 1926, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 17 North Wabash Ave.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 99 George St.

Introduction

WHO shall lead the parish if not the pastor? How shall he lead if he himself knows not the way? These are not the days for little men. If there are anywhere men of light and leading, prophets and seers, this is the day for which they were born.

> "The bravest of men may find stern work to do
> In the day of the Lord at hand."

At such a time every pastor must seek first for spiritual power and then for such methods as will best vitalize that power in the great task for which he is commissioned. If he is like his Master, he is a lover of men, father and brother, shepherd and physician of souls. If he goes to battle against the world, the flesh and all evil, it is not to a charge or a single battle but to a campaign that he must address himself. He must lay siege to the community. If he is wise, he is not after an audience but a congregation, not a crowd for an hour, but a company whom he can lead in worship and service, and whom he undertakes to build up in their most holy faith.

It is the part of wisdom for every pastor to supplement his own experience by that of others; to study carefully those methods and plans which have been honoured of God and shown to be effective in producing the results for which his soul longs. It will

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

broaden his outlook and give him increasing confidence to undertake large and far-reaching results. For this I know no book better than "Parish Evangelism." It is the product of the experience of many of the most successful pastors in the country. The atmosphere of the book is eminently sane and practical, and at the same time deeply spiritual.

Dr. Fagley is a master spiritual diagnostician. He knows what the times require and addresses himself to vital concerns. Every chapter is full of meat. It will revolutionize many a parish, if the pastor will follow Chapter II, and, instead of trying to do all the work himself and ending in nervous prostration or a broken heart, have the joy of showing his people that there are not two kinds of religion, one for the pulpit and another for the pew, but that pastor and people can have common share in the toil and in the glorious reward of spiritual service.

The chapters on Visitation, on Preaching, on the Pastor's Training Class, and on the Prayer Life of the People are of thrilling interest and most rewarding.

If any pastor does not know what path to take for evangelistic services, this book points the way. Now—Forward! March!!

CHARLES L. GOODELL, D. D.

Federal Council,
New York City.

Preface

THAT the work of the Christian Church may be programmed to advantage has been demonstrated by the experience of many successful pastors and effective churches.

A study of the method and the message of many of these churches has been the basis on which the material here presented has been prepared. There is nothing new or untried suggested here—for every plan has been used by pastors in churches of many denominations.

The program which is the basis of the discussion has been endorsed by several denominations, by many City and State Federations, by the Commission on Evangelism of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and by hundreds of pastors who have tried it and found it helpful.

It is sent out with the hope that it may be suggestive to ministers and church workers of the various churches of our Christian Brotherhood.

NOTE: For the fourth edition an Appendix has been added giving some of the helpful literature that churches are using in connection with their evangelistic programs.

F. L. F.

New York, N. Y.

Contents

I.	Parish Evangelism is Natural, Effective and Scriptural	11
II.	The Membership or Evangelistic Committee	18
III.	Planning the Year's Work	28
IV.	Fall Activities	40
V.	Fall Visitation and Pastoral Calling	51
VI.	January to Easter	60
VII.	Program of Preaching	69
VIII.	The Pastor's Training Class	78
IX.	Personal Work	88
X.	Deepening the Prayer Life of the People	98
XI.	Holy Week and Easter	108
XII	After Easter	115
	Appendix	122
	Why the Church is of Value to You	122
	What the Church Should Do for the Community	125
	How You Can Help This Church Serve This Community	128
	What This Church Offers You	131
	Why Ask People to Join the Church?	134
	The Invitation Committee	137
	The Fellowship Canvass	140

I

PARISH EVANGELISM IS NATURAL, EFFECTIVE AND SCRIPTURAL

PARISH Evangelism is no new or strange type of evangelism. It is as old as the New Testament and as simple as the method of Jesus. It is the coöperation of a pastor and his people in definitely planned religious work to enlist in the Christian life and service those persons for whom their church is most responsible. It is the experience of many churches that are doing effective work in evangelism that if their efforts be directed along the lines of a well-defined program the results will be far greater than if the efforts are undirected. This form of evangelism is fundamental, natural, effective; its results are permanent, and it is scriptural.

Fundamental. In the first place, parish evangelism is the fundamental activity of the church. To enlist men and women in Christian worship and service is what the church is organized to do. We have this conception of the church's work very clearly in mind whenever we think of foreign missions; for while we recognize the fact that the foreign missionary program includes schools, hospitals, agricultural projects and social reform, yet we all have in mind

as the one great aim of foreign missionary service the enlisting of men and women in the service of Christ and their training in Christian living.

We recognize also that the evangelistic work of the home missionary church is by all means its most important service. The first question asked of a home missionary enterprise relates not to its educational, social service or other activities—all of exceeding great value in themselves, as well as in relation to the whole Christian enterprise—but we do ask, first of all, of any home missionary project, What have you done and what are you doing to win men to Christ?

When we consider our home church, however, we are often a bit hazy in our thinking. We think of it as an institution essential for the development of Christian culture and the training of the saints; as a hotbed in which are germinated all sorts of worth-while community enterprises, or as a platform for the presentation of high ideals of Christian duty. All these things are essential to Christian civilization and they should not be left undone, but doing them does not make less the responsibility of the Church that it be true to the great foundation principle of its life—the bringing of people into vital relationship with God. Parish evangelism, which seeks to bring men to Christ and enlist them in the worship and service of the Christian Church in a natural way, is the most vital and fundamental activity of the Church of Christ.

Natural. Parish evangelism is a natural form of Christian activity. It looks upon the church as a growing organism which builds itself in natural ways,

enlarging its life through the activities of its members and inspired, not only as to growth but also as to the direction of its growth, by the spiritual life which gives it reality. Every living organism is bound by the unchanging law of growth—that it must either renew its life or die. This is an inevitable requirement of living things. Again, life is the development of a germ which has been endowed with the power of growth and this growth results directly from the activity of the various parts of the plant or animal body. Biology has taught us much concerning the many ways in which the divine principle of life works itself out in its environment and that in doing this it follows certain laws.

The church is a living body and its life is directed also by some fundamental laws. Among these are, that it must renew its life or die; that it must grow from within, that is, from the center of spiritual life which gives it being and reality; and that its own activity is essential to its growth. Through a program of parish evangelism the church sets itself to study its own life and seeks to renew and to expand that life. By so doing the church not only enriches the quality of its life but enlarges its life as well along lines of natural growth.

Effective. Parish evangelism is also an effective method of recruiting. A survey of the various denominations reveals the fact that approximately one-half of the churches are practically standing still or declining. That one-third are making a reasonable growth, and that the remaining one-sixth have a significant growth. A study of the life and work

of these effective churches shows that, with few exceptions, each has a definite plan of work.

The material here presented has come out of a study of the program of many of these churches. The methods here presented have all been tested and found effective by all sorts of churches—city, town and rural. The universal testimony of pastors who have used a program of evangelism is that it will work; that if the church will study how other churches plan and carry through their programs and will develop a program to suit its own needs and will carry that program through in a thoroughgoing fashion, the results will be most gratifying. I have never known a church to adopt a program for one year and after that to go back to the old hit or miss ways of other years. The most enthusiastic pastors for a program of parish evangelism are those who have been developing their programs through a period of years.

Lasting. The results of parish evangelism are lasting. This follows because the methods of recruiting are natural. As a rule it is most difficult to find permanent results five or ten years after a highly organized, emotional revival. In a conference on parish evangelism of the pastors of a mid-west city it was brought out in the discussion that a thoroughgoing canvass of the membership roll of the churches of that city revealed the fact that there were but five members then living and working in the various churches of that city of the whole number who were brought into the churches as a result of a tabernacle revival held some eight years before. There is a

very great place for the tabernacle form of religious work, but its chief result is not the building up of the membership of the local congregation. Its ideal more frequently is moral reform which if utilized by the churches will help their work very much indeed.

If our churches were willing to accept the tabernacle type of meeting for the thing which it can do best, and not expect of it the impossible, results would be far more lasting. But the unhappy condition exists that the final results are far different from what the churches and ministers anticipate. It is true, of course, that no small number of those who unite with the church through its own activity drop by the wayside, but in spite of death and removal and backsliding, the churches show a considerable growth year by year, and this renewal of life and growth of the Christian fellowship depend when all is said upon the faithful service of pastor and people, who have worked in many instances without a definite program.

Scriptural. Finally, parish evangelism is the New Testament method. As Jesus went about His work during the years of His ministry He not only preached to the people but also sat down with them and quietly explained to them individually and in small groups the riches of God's grace. We have few records of His sermons, we have fewer records of commitments to His Gospel as a result of the sermons; but we have many records of His conversation with men and women, singly or in small groups, when He explained to them the meaning and value of life, and in this way He was able to woo and win them to

whole-hearted allegiance. The same thing is true of the apostles. They preached great sermons and won converts directly as a result of pulpit presentation, notably on the day of Pentecost; but far wider was the practice of meeting people in groups, in homes, sometimes in chapels or along the wayside, where the fundamental decisions of life were made under the influence of these men who knew God through Christ and who were able to interpret to needy hearts the realities of companionship with the living Christ. The church which concentrates on a definite program of parish evangelism in winning men and women to the fellowship of worship and service in the Church of Christ is following the method used by Christ and followed by His apostles.

The church whose pastor and people unite in a program of parish evangelism will discover two things concerning the work of the church. It will find that the new members who come into the church in this natural and normal way, who have been led to the decision by those with whom they are to live and work, who are received by the pastor who is to be their leader through the days to come, that these new members readily enter into the fellowship of service and worship of the church with every element in favour of their remaining faithful to the church. The church will discover also that its own life is deepened and enriched through fellowship in fruitful service and that there is, year by year, a growing efficiency in every department of its work.

When the church has decided to commit itself to a thoroughgoing evangelistic service it should, first of

all, see clearly the need of a program of activity suited to its own life and effective in meeting the needs of the community; and second, it should select either by pastoral appointment or church election an evangelistic or membership committee which would help in carrying the program through. In this discussion we will consider next the organization of such a committee, and then the program for the local church and the elements that should enter into it.

II

THE MEMBERSHIP OR EVANGELISTIC COMMITTEE

THE evangelistic program for the church should originate with the pastor, as he is the official leader and religious teacher of the congregation. When he entered his pastorate he affirmed that he had experienced in his life the renewing presence of the Spirit of God, that he had thought about his own experience in religion in such a way that he knew how religion ministers to the fundamental needs of life, and that he realized that men need above everything else to enter into his experience of knowing Jesus Christ as a personal Redeemer. In brief, that he was fitted to lead his people in spiritual things.

While the pastor is the religious teacher and leader of the parish, he must be able to see and to have his people see that the administration of a church and the promulgation of the Gospel is not a one-man task. He will realize as his program develops, if he had not before come to this conclusion, that there are in his parish men and women of exceptional religious experience and broad knowledge of the needs of men and of the grace of God, who can do some things which are impossible for him to accomplish. Bishop Leete has well pointed out that the world will never be saved by a committee, and that in our

development of organization and the establishment of method in religious work we should ever be careful not to bind ourselves in too hard and fast a fashion to programs; but that we should always have our plans flexible enough to be able to bend both our own program and our method of work to the will of the Spirit as it is made known to us as we work together with God.

While then we must guard ourselves against putting too much confidence in mechanical programs, we should bear in mind also that wise saying of Spurgeon that, "Prayer and means must go together. Means without prayer—presumption! Prayer without means—hypocrisy!" (Quoted by Leete, "Every Day Evangelism," page 48.) I believe profoundly in the doctrine of the importance of human coöperation in Divine regeneration. We may speculate that God could, if He so willed, overpower the wills of His children and compel entire obedience to His will, though such a thought contradicts our understanding of God's nature and love. Rather we should remember that as Bishop Oldham said many years ago, "God for His own wise ends has conditioned the regeneration of mankind upon man's coöperation." There are instances where God seems to speak directly to individual souls, rather than through another. The conversion of Paul is a most striking instance of this manifestation of Divine power. Yet while God, by a sudden revelation of Himself through the risen Christ, brought to Paul a conviction of his own sinful life, we should also remember the loving ministry of Christian friends who interpreted to Paul

through their own experience in Christ, the meaning of his vision and opened the way for him into Christian service, where Paul found for himself the truth, "If any man wills to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

As we study the experience of men who have come close to God we find that with few exceptions their introduction to God has been through some one of good-will and Divine spirit who has opened to them the avenue which leads to communion with God. Believing as we do then, not only in the possibility but also in the necessity of human coöperation in redemption, it is reasonable that we should study the testimony and the experience of others in planning how best to accomplish our part in this supreme task. This leads us at once out of the mystical into the realm of the practical—though we can never ignore the mystical or believe that any method alone can produce the conversion of another's life.

It is the common testimony of pastors who have made use of some of their consecrated men and women as a membership or evangelistic committee that their own power is multiplied many fold; that many men and women are led into fruitful service, and that the whole church becomes enthusiastic in the work which it is organized to do—the enlistment of men and women in the worship and service of the Christian Church. It is to be understood, however, that the evangelistic or membership committee is but to lead in the work and that there will be tasks for all who are willing to help. The appointment of the committee should serve to unify the church

around its year's work and to give the program importance in the mind of the church. Nothing will so unite a church in an enterprise as to have a plan presented to it which recommends itself to the people as something worth while. The value of a committee to plan and execute the work of the church has been demonstrated in other lines of activity. For example, the erection of a new church building or the every-member canvass. When a church plans to erect a new church building we have all noticed the spirit of optimism which it manifests, how it overcomes obstacles and accomplishes the seeming impossible. These results come from the union of consecrated men and women in a worthy enterprise where all are working together to certain definite ends. While the building project centers in the building committee, there is not a single organization connected with the church but what feels and reflects the pulsing power of unified activity. We have likewise all noticed the way in which as simple a thing as a social by the ladies' society, which draws into its activity a large number of women, will give quickening activity and deepening interest in all of the departments of the church.

These things but illustrate one of the fundamental characteristics of human life, which is that folks like to do things together. Call to mind the interest young men take in army drills. What could be more prosaic than the drill field? Yet because a large number are doing the same thing at the same time and trying to do it in the same way, there is a thrill of coöperation and of brotherhood which brings great

satisfaction to those taking part in the exercise. One of the world's renowned physical trainers has said that he owes his success and fortune to this desire for doing things together. In his physical training department he has nothing new, and he asks the men who join his organization to do nothing which they could not as easily do alone, but which as a matter of fact they will not do alone; yet they will join together under his leadership and find great pleasure as well as benefit in doing together the simple things which renew their physical life. When the pastor thinks of this trait of human nature he will be convinced that to make effective his ministry he must be wise enough in his own generation to profit by what we know of the psychology of life, as well as what we know of the revelation of God's grace.

There are three specific functions for such a committee. First: *To advise with the pastor as to the details of the local program.* Every pastor discovers with very superficial observation that his church is a peculiar church and that his situation has certain individualistic qualities which are not common to other parishes. This common observation of ministers is true, for as one man differs from another in personality, so do communities vary. If a program is to be effective in meeting the needs of a local community there must be a clear understanding of what those needs are. The pastor who perhaps has not been long a resident of the community has an advantage by which he can survey the community as a whole and set down some of the characteristic needs. But at the same time if he trusts to his own

observations alone he is quite likely to overlook some of the fundamental characteristics of the community life. He will frequently err in his appraisal of men and will not be sensitive to the traditions of the parish, which to those who have lived there during their lives are among their most sacred possessions.

The second function of such a committee is: *To assist the pastor in carrying through the program which is decided upon.* Most of our people are convinced of the truth of the Gospel. You can scarcely ever meet a man or woman who does not believe that there is a God, that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of mankind, and His life the ideal for all men, and that we are created in the spiritual likeness of God and endowed with the possibility of eternal life. In other words, the churches through the long years of consistent service and proclamation have virtually convinced our people of the truth of God and of Christ and of sin, salvation and eternal life. As Dr. Fosdick has so well said, the careful survey made at the time of the enlistment for the great war showed that there was scarcely an atheist among the American youth. Where we fail is not in securing the assent of the people to the truths of religion; but in bringing the people to a whole-hearted commitment to the worship and service of Christ. When the committee has outlined its program it should then proceed under the leadership of the pastor to carry out that program of enlisting men and women in the worship and service of the church where they will learn to practice day by day the Gospel of good-will and enter more fully into communion with God.

And third, the program will be set forward if the members are able to *give effective support to the p. ogram in the various church organizations.* It is essential that members of the committee be drawn from the various organizations, that they may be able to present the program to those organizations and secure their endorsement; that there be members of the women's society and the men's group, and of the Sunday-school, who will know from the beginning the development of the program, be familiar with its details and be able to secure the coöperation of the organization in which they labour in the united enterprise of the church. This membership or evangelistic committee is needed to assist the pastor to plan his program and to help him to carry it through.

The Composition of the Committee

The committee should be composed of at least two classes of individuals. First, those who are members because of their representative capacity; this will include members of the Board of Deacons or Elders, of the church school, of the women's organization, men's organization and young people's societies. These members may be selected by the pastor or be designated by the heads of representative organizations. But in whatever way appointed they should be persons of natural leadership in the organizations they represent, whose words carry weight and whose judgments are respected, and whose lives are in happy accord with their religious profession.

The second class of members of the committee

should be selected by the pastor as members at large. These should be persons of potential leadership in the church, who by gifts and graces, will be most effective in helping to develop the various items of the program.

The Preliminary Work of the Committee

It has been found helpful to appoint the evangelistic or membership committee in May or June preceding the opening of the church year, which is usually September or October. First, where this is done it affords the committee an opportunity to make a study of evangelistic methods and purposes. Some pastors secure a number of helpful books and pass these around from member to member during the summer months. The books to be used in this way should be brief, non-argumentative and helpful discussions of some of the features of church work. For example, books dealing with the mission of the church, personal evangelism, the evangelistic literature of the denomination, a brief history of the denomination and its contribution to the religious life of our times, and some simple book on the Christian interpretation of the meaning and value of life. The reading of such books lays a splendid foundation for the more detailed study of the practical methods of evangelistic work, which should be one feature of the committee's activities during the church year.

The second line of preliminary activity for the committee is to make a study of the church and the community. This might well be assigned to a subcommittee or to one person especially fitted for this

work, but the results of such a study ought to be available for the committee early in the fall, and hence this work should be done if possible during the summer months. This study could well follow the following outline:

The total population of the community or parish.
The number of church members.
The number of children in the community of Sunday-school age.
The percentage of these enrolled in the church school.
The enrollment of the Sunday-school.
How many of these are now members of the church?
How many church school pupils of twelve years of age or over, not members of the church, that is, how many boys and girls, men and women, who are not now members of the church, is the church school reaching with its message of instruction?

There should be also a careful study of the membership of the church which should give the following information:

The percentage regular in attendance.
The percentage occasional in attendance.
The percentage in the process of lapsing.
The number of absentees and their status.

These items of information will indicate the opportunity of the church for intensive cultivation of its own field, and while this study is being made there should be a beginning of the listing of prospective members, which lists will help guide the committee in its work later in the year. These may be divided somewhat as follows:

The husbands of wives who are members.
The wives of husbands now members.
Children in families containing one or more members of the church.
Children in the church school or young people's societies or congregation, not members.
Contributors to the church not members.
Attendants of the congregation not members.
Attendants at the various organizations not members.

In the discussion which grows out of this study there will be additional suggestions concerning the formation of prospective lists. As the committee studies the personnel of the congregation along these lines, names will be discovered now and then of those who will be prospective workers in the church program and who ought to be included on the membership or evangelistic committee. For this reason the list of this committee should not be closed, as the pastor may desire to add to it from time to time as new people are discovered who will be effective workers in the program of parish evangelism.

This committee, composed of official representatives of the church organizations and other persons of personal though perhaps not of official position, should work with the pastor to make a careful study of the church and its community and likewise to study some of the literature on religious work; that they will be able to advise with him most effectively in formulating the program for the church in which the pastor and people will coöperate to the best advantage in the program of parish evangelism.

III

PLANNING THE YEAR'S WORK

The Program

THE first definite task of the membership or evangelistic committee is to adopt a working program for the church year. A program presupposes a definite goal towards which a church is working. Therefore it is necessary that the membership of the church have rather clearly in mind some definite ideals by which to shape its course. There is much hazy thinking right here on the part of many church people, laity as well as pastors. It goes without saying that if a church is to accomplish anything really worth while it must first of all have a goal or an ideal towards which it is working. We must always remember that results do not happen but are brought about.

The entire discussion of this book presupposes that the church has rather definitely in mind an ideal towards which it is working, and that that ideal is not simply a dim, indefinite expectation of reasonable growth, but that the pastor and his helpers have considered certain things which they wish to accomplish as a result of the year's labour. It is understood that by the very nature of the church's life the goal of its year's work cannot be absolutely fixed in all

details, for the attitude of the church must be that of an opportunist, that it may be able to take advantage of winds and tides in the spiritual realm and in community activity. The ideal of the church which should serve as a guide for the year's activities will have of course many elements; some relating to social service, missionary education, religious education, community welfare, as well as various other items. But if the church is to be true to its mission and true to its ultimate purpose there must be a definite expectation for increased membership as pastor and people coöperate in the program of parish evangelism for enlisting men and women in the Christian Church.

A program is in reality a working chart by which the church purposes to advance from where it now is towards the goal which is the ideal of its activity. It goes without saying that unless a church follows a plan of work the chances are that it will reach no place in particular and that its efforts will be a good deal without direction and definite results, and much energy will be wasted. The church will lack the centralizing influence which a well worked out program always gives and will end the year with a spirit of resignation, or worse still of discouragement.

On the other hand, if a program has been adopted and carried through with reasonable success, there will be a feeling of confidence and satisfaction as the church realizes that it is finding itself in worth-while, well-directed efforts towards clearly defined ends. One of the best things about a program of church work is that it goes better each year. As the pro-

gram develops it will be found that efficiency is gained by practice and that interest deepens with accomplishment. A plan for the year for the church is to the pastor and his committee what the chart is to the sailor or the blue print to the builder, or the season's work to the farmer, that is, a guide which indicates that certain things be done in a certain order. This is the universal testimony of pastors who have used a program in their work. While the particular items of the program vary year by year, still the main outline will remain practically the same and the people will accustom themselves to the program of church life as it develops with the flow of the seasons. The church will come to look forward to certain features of church work which will be emphasized in appropriate fashion with much pleasurable anticipation.

Elements of the Plan

There are three things which the pastor ought to take into consideration as he arranges the details of his program of parish evangelism. *The first is, What are the local needs?* The information which will help him on this point will be derived in part from the study which he or some members of his committee have made of the parish and the membership situation in his church. For example, it may be:

(*a*) The pastor will find that the greatest need is the strengthening of the church school; that the teachers need encouragement, that new teachers are required and that the work of the Sunday-school be given point. That is, that boys and girls who have

spent a number of years in the Sunday-school shall be equipped with such knowledge and training and development of character that they may know the truth of the Gospel and be led to commit themselves to Christ.

(*b*) Or it may be that there are a large number of boys and girls in the Sunday-school who are not now members of the church and the year's work should properly be built around the task of bringing these boys and girls into personal relationship with Christ. If there are any considerable number of boys and girls in the church school who have not confessed Christ, the pastor will find that here is a year's work upon which it will pay him well to specialize.

(*c*) It may be that the chief need of the church is building the congregation. This is an outstanding need of many churches. There are men and women of good will in most communities not now members of the church who should be brought into the congregation where they may learn something of the ideals of worship and service of the Christian community, and who will give the pastor and his committee a splendid field for personal evangelism as the years go by. It should be kept clearly in mind that congregations do not happen but result from the interest and labours of individuals. There is no valid reason why a minister should sit down and fold his hands and resign himself to the thought of continuing through life with small congregations. Hence it may be that developing the congregation may be the chief item of the program for the year.

(*d*) Then again the congregation may be made up quite largely of those who are not officially connected with the church and who have made no confession of belief in Christ, or they may not have an active faith and need a thoroughgoing regeneration of life. The conversion of the members of the congregation as it now exists may be the program for the year.

(*e*) Or again, as will be found in the majority of cases, the pastor and committee will find as a result of their study of the church and community that there is a little nucleus of devoted saints, surrounded by a circle of those who are members of the church and faithful to its worship and service; these surrounded by a still larger circle of occasional attendants of the church; and beyond these an outer circle of men and women of good impulse who look upon this church as their church though not attending its services nor joining in its worship. Where such is the case, the pastor will build his program to meet this primary need of extending the number and influence of the inner circle and of bringing those of the outer circles nearer the center of the church's life. Then, whatever program adopted, the pastor and people should always seek to communicate to all the church their own spirit of enthusiastic participation in the worship of God and the service of their fellow-men. The first requirement of the program is, then, that it be framed to meet the needs of the local situation.

The second requirement is, that the program for the local church shall harmonize so far as possible

with the program of the denomination. More and more the denominations are coming to denominational programs of evangelism which take into consideration the polity, practice and personality of the communion. The denominational program forms a basis upon which the churches of like order can cooperate one with the other, greatly to the encouragement of all. It is of the greatest value to all churches for pastor and people to feel that that which they are trying to do in their church is something along the same line as that which their brethren in an adjoining church of the same communion are trying to do. It is quite likely that where there is a denominational program the denomination will set aside certain of its general workers who will be available to assist the pastors in placing before their people, not only the denominational ideals, but also the experiences and the testimony of ministers here and there who have been effective in their service. There will also be denominational helps, which are in reality but bits of testimony from pastors who have done the thing that they have written about. For these reasons the program for the local church should take into consideration the elements and the ideals and material of the denominational program.

The third requirement is, that it shall take advantage of the flow of seasons. There is nothing to hinder the farmer from going out in September and planting corn if he so desires, but when he does this he cannot expect the same sort of returns from his labours as if he plants it in May. For the farmer who plants in May takes into consideration the flow

of seasons and his efforts are expended in coöperation with natural laws. So in the realm of religion there seems to be a certain seasonal flow of life when the great truths can be best emphasized. At least it is the testimony of a vast and growing number of pastors that to follow the Christian year in a program of preaching and church work is to present the Christian faith in an effective, logical and acceptable way. It is taking advantage of the seasons when people most naturally think of the great subjects of Christian thought—Christmas with its wealth of joyous experience, Easter as the consummation of the Christian hope. It may be that a pastor's experience is not in accord with the experience of those who use the Christian calendar in their year's work, and it may be that he will find other seasons which are more propitious. For the greater number of hard-working pastors, however, the flow of seasons as indicated in the Christian year affords a valuable opportunity to emphasize the great truths at the most effective time. If the Christian year is not adopted some other, better fitted to the needs of the church, should be followed.

There are certain other elements, of course, which must be provided for. For example, the pastor must realize that he has other responsibilities to his people and to the Christian commonwealth, and that he must not shut these other interests out of participation in the work of the church. It must be understood that space be allowed for many other lines of church work—mission study, Sunday-school rallies and programs, stewardship, moral reform, community proj-

ects, the financial canvass—and with it all time must be allowed for the constant routine of parish duties.

With these thoughts in mind concerning the requirements of the program—that it shall meet local needs, be in harmony with the denominational objectives and allow for the flow of seasons—the pastor and his committee should be prepared to adopt the working plan for the year. To do this the committee should meet early in the fall, if it has not done so in the late summer, to make a review of the study of the community and to map out the program for the year's work. If the program has been in operation in previous years the program for the following year can well be adopted in May or June, when the experiences and lessons of the preceding year's work are fresh in mind. Where this is done year by year the details of the program may be worked out leisurely during the months of less strain and the program completed in time to present to the church early in the fall. But where the program is adopted in the early summer following a year's work, or where it is adopted in the late summer following study and preparation with the hope of initiating an orderly program of evangelism, there should be in the early fall a meeting of the committee which should take into consideration whatever new light may be shed upon the situation and plans be formulated for initiating the program in the best possible way.

More and more churches are coming to a standardized program which in its main items are somewhat as follows:

A Year's Program

September-December

1. A Meeting of the Church Evangelistic Committee: To face the whole year's work of the church and to map out a year's program.
2. Church Rallies: To bring the church and its work to the attention of all the people.
3. Parish Visitation: To locate and enlist possible attendants and adherents of the church and its organizations.
4. Fall Reception of members at the November Communion.

January-Easter

1. The preaching of the Gospel with a distinct evangelistic appeal.
2. An Invitation Committee: To study the best methods of winning decisions for Christ and to work continuously with the pastor to secure new members.
3. The Pastor's Training Class: To instruct children twelve years of age and older in the fundamentals of Christian faith and the meaning of church membership.
4. The Lenten Prayer Calendar: Extended use of "The Fellowship of Prayer" in private devotions, at the family altar, in prayer circles and in the work of the church.
5. Holy Week Services.
6. The Easter Ingathering: The reception of new members at the Communion Service on or near Easter.

After Easter Conservation

1. Continuation Plans: To continue evangelistic endeavours in special groups to Children's Sunday,

Mother's Sunday or Pentecost Sunday, and to enlist new members in definite tasks of Christian service.

2. Absentee Campaign: The locating and reclaiming of absentee members who are living in the community of the church though holding membership in churches elsewhere.

This standardized program groups the year's work into three periods, each period having certain definite characteristics and coming to a peak with a reception of members at psychological moments in the year's work. It should be understood that this general program should be used by the local church simply as a foundation on which to build its own, which while taking into consideration the elements of the general program must be built to meet the needs of the local church.

As was said, each church must decide for itself the time of the year best suited for that church to carry through the items of its program. Some of the items listed in the September-December period may fit in better after January. The series of devotional or evangelistic meetings which are scheduled for the two weeks preceding Easter are held more successfully by some pastors in the early weeks of January. Many rural churches of the South hold special meetings in the late fall months. The Pastor's Training Class, which in this program is part of the Lenten period, is conducted by some pastors after Easter with a public reception on Children's Day or later. A large number of churches, especially Methodist and Baptist, follow Decision Day

(usually Palm Sunday) with a series of meetings for those desiring church membership.

These problems are all of importance and must be solved by each pastor. He should arrange the program to meet the needs of the local situation. The various elements of the program as here discussed, however, should find a place in the program of the local church—if not at the time indicated, then at a more suitable season.

Adoption by the Church

After the program has been outlined by the pastor and his committee it will be helpful if the program be brought before the church in effective fashion and adopted formally by the church. A very good method of presenting the program to the church is for the committee to have printed sufficient copies of the program for general distribution, then for the pastor to devote a Sunday morning for presenting to the people the program and the reasons which underlie it; the ideals which it seeks to express and the objects which it seeks to attain. Some pastors in presenting the program on "Program Sunday" invite to the pulpit a few of the leaders of the congregation, a member of the Board of Deacons, the superintendent of the Sunday-school, president of the women's society or others, each one in a well-prepared three-minute talk to pledge to the program the support of these organizations. This will do much to create an atmosphere favourable to the consideration of the program by the people.

When the program has been presented to the peo-

ple, it is helpful to have a formal vote from the church to accept the program and to pledge co-operation in carrying it through. Such a vote is easy to secure and can be of the greatest helpfulness, as by coming to a vote the church crystallizes its own sentiments and attitude towards the program and the fact that it has formally adopted the program will lend added weight and influence to it as the days go by. This is a natural way to initiate the year's work and an effective way to register the fact in the minds of the people.

After the program has been accepted by the church—either at a morning service, at a business session of the church, at a specially advertised prayer meeting or in any other way—it should then be presented to the Sunday-school and other organizations, either by the pastor alone or by the pastor with the assistance of some member of the organization. It is of great helpfulness to have the active support of these organizations and it can be had usually unanimously and enthusiastically if these organizations be approached at the time of initiating the program. That is to say, that if the program is presented to the Sunday-school or the women's society and the pastor expresses the desire that that organization pledge its coöperation and support to the program for the year's work, he will find that the support will be given, that the organization will appreciate being consulted, and that in so presenting the program he has strengthened the morale of his people and has done a great deal towards initiating the program with every possible condition favourable to carrying it through successfully.

IV

FALL ACTIVITIES

THE usual church program is planned so that the fall activities constitute the opening of the year's work. These are of very great importance. It is the common testimony of pastors that the results of the year's work depend in considerable measure upon the effectiveness of these activities. There is an opportunity at the beginning of the year which does not exist later to initiate the program with sufficient enthusiasm and momentum to overcome the natural inertia of the people. The first object of the fall work is that there shall be put into the thinking of the members of the church, as well as into the thinking of the community, the realization that here is an organization that has set for itself a definite piece of work to do; that it is clear in mind as to how that work is to be accomplished and is setting about its task with a spirit of confidence and determination. To accomplish this result pastors are finding that a fall rally of the church is perhaps the most effective method.

The Fall Rally

If properly advertised and carried through, a fall rally will reënlist the members of the church who are returning to their homes after their summer vaca-

tions, and reinterest those members who have remained at home but who may have lessened during the summer their usual participation in the activities of the church. We must keep ever in mind the fact that human interest is a variable thing and that it is a natural phenomenon for interest in any enterprise to lag. Instead of looking upon this fact as an obstacle in the way of church work, pastors should look rather at the splendid opportunity that is afforded them to reawaken interest. As all psychologists teach us, people will return to an enterprise with more interest than ever after a period of seeming indifference, provided the interest is reënlisted by new means and additional fresh interests are aroused. It is absolutely contrary to our study of, or knowledge of, human nature to believe that any large number of people can continue month in and month out active interest in the same things. We should realize that the seeming loss of interest on the part of the people in the work of the church after a season of activity is not due to a loss of moral sense or a victory of evil, a serious backsliding or anything else but the natural way in which human nature acts. It is the wise pastor who will understand this changing attitude of people and will allow them those periods of quietness and seeming lack of interest in religious work, feeling that if he uses the knowledge which is his as a result of observation and study of mankind he will be able to secure far more efficient coöperation after this period of relaxation.

This does not mean that the church ought to close its activities during the summer months, for there

are those in every congregation who by nature and long course of habit have accustomed themselves to regular participation in the service and worship of the church. For these, as well as for the occasional attendant at church, the summer services should be made as interesting and helpful as possible. But for the great mass of church workers there should be a period of relaxation and they should be made to feel that in relaxing their interest in the work of the church for the time being, they are not the victims of a slump in morals. The pastor who bides his time with sweetness of spirit and keeps in touch with his people in an unobtrusive way during the period of relaxation, will find that his people will respond with greater readiness than ever when he calls upon them for renewed activities in the work of the church.

One wise pastor who has observed these traits and who is wise in his generation suggests to his people during the late spring certain good books of sermons, of missions, missionary biography and other devotional literature for them to take on vacation, or if they are remaining at home for the summer, for Sunday reading, which will help them to an intelligent worship of God and a deepening interest in the work of the church. The pastor who takes this attitude towards his people and towards their summer relaxation will find if he is able to provide any worth-while new interest in the fall that the year's work will open with his Rally Sunday with an enthusiasm which will be a surprise to the community and a most heartening experience to the workers of the church. Instead of having a congregation wearied and dis-

couraged after the let down of the summer, he will have a congregation rested and refreshed who will enter into the program of the church with the greatest enthusiasm. The fall rally will also give the church an opportunity to enlist newcomers to the parish. There will be, during the summer as at other seasons, removals of some families and new families will be coming into the parish. It should be the aim of the church to bring into the church services on Rally Sunday representatives of every new family that has come to the parish. The pastor and his committee should feel that it rests upon them as an imperative duty that the interest of these new people should be aroused and they should be brought into the church services.

The fall rally is planned to reinterest the members and former attendants of the church and to secure the interest of newcomers to the parish. In addition, a well-conducted rally will cause the people of the community at large to think of their obligations to the church and to plan for their own participation in its worship and service. They will be led to think of the church as the heart of the community, as the seat of the community's conscience, as the source of those streams of righteousness and community helpfulness which purify and invigorate the entire community life. A well-conducted rally acquaints the community with the church, its plans, its methods, its personnel and its outlook. It gives the pastor a splendid opportunity of meeting personally a great many new people and of saying a word of encouragement to the members of his congregation. It gives

the church the finest sort of opportunity to present its program to the people of the community at large and let them know that here is an institution which seeks not its own welfare, but is interested in every good thing in the lives of the people and of the community as a whole.

The church rally it will be seen is an entirely different event from the rallies of the Sunday-school, the young people's society, or like organizations. These rallies, which will in all likelihood come in their own time and follow their own programs, are of the greatest value to the work of their respective organizations and contribute largely to the *esprit de corps* of the whole enterprise. Effective as they may be, they fall short of accomplishing what ought to be done in the fall of the year to enlist new families and to reënlist former members in regular attendance at church and fellowship in its worship and service.

The forms of the fall rally are many and the pastor and his committee should seek to vary the program year by year. *In some sections of the country the rally is known as the Harvest Home Service,* and perhaps this is the most successful type of fall rally. In churches where the fall rally takes the form of a Harvest Home Service the church is usually decorated with the fruits of field and orchard, the hymns are of a thanksgiving nature. This is an historical form of church service, as from the earliest days the New England Colonists celebrated the harvest home in late September or early October, which was a service entirely different in kind and quality from the more formal service of Thanksgiving Day. Those

churches that use the Harvest Home type of fall rally do not find any interference whatever with the later celebration of Thanksgiving Day.

Another type is the Reunion Service. Many churches find this a most effective service, the object being to secure if possible the attendance of former members and attendants who live at a distance, and to bring to this service as many of the community as possible, especially the older residents who may not have been active in the services of the church, and the newcomers to the parish, that all may know more of the service and worship of the church.

Still another form is the Family Sunday. This has been found very helpful, the object being to secure the attendance of the people by families, a sort of revival for the day of that almost forgotten custom of families going to church and sitting together in the same pew. In addition to these forms there is the so-called "Go to Church Sunday," with its well-known variations. Whatever form is adopted the program should fit into the ideal of the day. The songs, the Scripture and particularly the sermon should deal with the unifying thought of our common life which the day seeks to hold in memory and the object and method of carrying through this item of the program of the church should be held ever in mind.

During the fall it is quite likely that the pastor and his committee will care to go over the parish at least twice. First as a preliminary canvass for the purpose of inviting the members of the congregation and others to participate in the exercises of Rally Sunday

and to secure their coöperation in inviting their neighbours; and also for the purpose of securing a list of those who may be considered as prospective members of the parish, particularly the newcomers to the parish and those residents of the parish with whom the pastor feels the church has opportunity to exert its influence. The second canvass ought to be in the nature of a thoroughgoing parish visitation. For this there is not time before the fall rally, as to accomplish the best results in a visitation of this sort there must be sufficient leisure to permit a satisfactory piece of work.

The Preliminary Canvass

The preliminary canvass is for the purpose of securing correct addresses of present members and of registering all changes in the families of the members—marriages, deaths, removals, additions, visitors or roomers with families—but primarily to learn where the members are, how the summer has gone with them and of the new people of the community.

The importance of correct lists of names. One of the first things which a pastor and his committee will realize as they begin to work their program along practical lines is the absolute necessity of an up-to-date list of constituents, supporters and prospects. Many a church organization has lost influence with families by sending mail to an address which has not been the home for months past. Other errors are that names are misspelled, initials misplaced, street numbers and the names of members of the family are found lacking in many church lists.

The way in which many church rolls are kept is enough to make angels weep. Where this is the case it is generally but one index of the way in which other work of the parish is carried on, but which lacks so visible a means of registering neglect. The preliminary canvass should result in an up-to-date list of names which will likely fall into five divisions.

(1) The names of members. The committee ought to be absolutely sure that these members are living at the address given and whether or not there is any serious illness or any special reason for the immediate attention of the pastor.

(2) List of contributors. This list should indicate who of the contributors are members and who are not. Contributors who are not members are usually prospective church members.

(3) List of attendants of the church. These are the names of members of the congregation who are not listed on either the membership list or the list of contributors. These attendants at the church who are neither members nor contributors are of course favourable prospects as church members.

(4) There will be next a list of those looking to the church for spiritual ministry. That is to say, in the community there will be families where the minister is called for weddings, funerals, baptisms and other ministrations, where the people are seemingly unattached to the church but by this call for spiritual ministry, align themselves as having interest in this church. So whenever the pastor or church worker is asked to minister to families not connected with the church, these all should be listed as people

worth while to cultivate, for they look upon this church as their church.

(5) Lastly, those unattached people of good-will in the community who through the recommendation of neighbours, doctors, visitors, newcomers, or old residents, are on the list of future prospects. It will be a source of surprise to the pastor and his committee to find how far the influence of his church extends and how many people in the community look to him and his church for spiritual leadership. There are few people in any community who are not interested in the church as a whole and in one church more than another. While they may not show this interest openly in any way, yet almost every family feels a sort of attachment to some church and it is the pastor's responsibility to see that this interest is cultivated.

The Object of the Church Rally

The real object of the Church Rally is to put the worship and service of the church into the thought of the people, and everything should be done to this end. Some useful methods are the writing of personal letters to former members, the use of printed invitations, the wide distribution of material bearing upon the work of the church, and attractive announcements in store windows and in the daily papers together with an inviting and wide-awake program for the day, and, above all else in value, the personal work of the members of the congregation in inviting others. The church of course is under a very heavy responsibility that the program as advertised be car-

ried through and that all who have a part in the program really "deliver the goods"; that the music and the sermon and all other parts of the service be such as to cause those who come in response to the invitation to want to make churchgoing, and especially to this church, a part of their weekly schedule.

An Example

One successful pastor used the following method to create interest in the Rally in his church: The accurate list of members of his own church was supplemented by the names of all the residents of the community not affiliated with any other church, including the names of the unchurched newcomers in the parish. Four weeks before his "Family Day" he sent to all a letter of invitation with a brief folder on "Why the Church is of Value to You." The second week he sent to each a folder on "What the Church Should Do for the Community." The third week he sent a leaflet on "How You Can Help This Church Serve This Community." In this were listed various tasks for which workers were desired. And then on the week of the Sunday to be observed, he sent the program of the Sunday service and a leaflet on "What This Church Offers You."[1] An informal welcoming committee was appointed and the members were given careful preparation for their duties of the day—to make the newcomers feel at home, and to secure their names and addresses. In this church, "Family Day" was a great success, and the year's work was

[1] Contents of these leaflets are reprinted in the appendix.

initiated with momentum and the natural inertia of the congregation reduced to the minimum.

If the program for the year has not been presented at a special Program Sunday, it will be found exceedingly effective to make this presentation a part of the rally day exercises. At least the printed program should be presented and the church be made to feel that the Rally Sunday is the opening of a new year in the life of that church and that around the program they are all to build into the worship and service of the church the best of their faith and thought and prayer. As churches continue to use the rally day service, there will be suggested to them many forms and features which will add to the interest and effectiveness of the day. It will be found that year by year the people will look forward to the annual day—Harvest Home, Home Coming, Program Sunday, or whatever other form may be adopted—with much pleasurable anticipation and the thrill and optimism which come to the congregation that does one good thing in effective fashion will be of the greatest help in carrying through the other features of the program.

V

FALL VISITATION AND PASTORAL CALLING

FOLLOWING Rally Sunday there should be a painstaking visitation of the entire parish. The preliminary canvass for names preparatory to Rally Sunday will bring to the pastor and his committee many new names as well as refresh their memory of some neglected people of the parish who should be called upon at once. In addition to these, the entire church constituency should be visited. At least once each year the pastor or his assistant should visit every home in the parish. Such a visitation will be of the greatest helpfulness to the work of the church.

Pastoral Calling

It is not necessary to introduce here a discussion of pastoral calling except to say this: In making a call on a family the pastor should have in mind just what his object is. This may be outlined in part as follows: He represents the organized church in its worship and service, and his conversation, as well as his presence, should emphasize this fact. His conversation will naturally begin with the family, the members of the family, where they have employment, if they are progressing in their employment; what

kinds of ambitions the different members may have; what sort of an ideal the mother has for the future of her children; what are the dominating interests in the family life; what interest there is in religion; what participation they have had in church life and work heretofore; the special needs of the family; in what manner the church may make a definite contribution, both to the family life and to the lives of the individuals, and to what specific tasks in the church they can be invited. These are in brief some of the topics the pastor should have in mind as he directs his conversation.

Of course it is understood that the pastor will be wise enough not to make this evident, but the visit should result in the pastor's coming away from that home with these items of information securely fixed in his own mind, and as soon as he reaches his study he should put on paper his impressions, the needs and the opportunities of this family. In this way he has before him the data upon which to base the campaign which he and the members of his church will carry through, the object of which is that the church shall minister to the needs of this family and shall win them to whole-hearted service in the church and fellowship in its worship. When one realizes the long and careful period of cultivation required to bring a family not in touch with the church, into active participation in its worship and service, he will weigh very carefully the various elements of such a program and will appraise the introductory visit and analysis of conditions and opportunities very highly indeed.

The neglect of a thoroughgoing pastoral visitation of the parish is perhaps the outstanding cause of failure on the part of pastors. It has long been said that "a home visiting pastor has a churchgoing people." There have been a few outstanding pulpit orators in American church life who have been able to build up and hold year after year a congregation through the power of their pulpit presentation; but the sad thing about such an enterprise is that with few exceptions, after the death or resignation of such a pulpit prince the congregation has melted away and the organization ofttimes given up its life. What is said here is not intended in any way to disparage adequate and effective pulpit presentation of the Gospel. I believe with all my heart that the best preaching the world has ever known is not in the past but in the future. A minister who loves his work and who has the sense of honour towards the obligation he has assumed to Christ, and mankind, will do everything in his power to strengthen the persuasiveness of his sermons that they may instruct, inspire and warm the lives of his people. The pulpit service of the church is perhaps the best cared for of any feature of church work and nine-tenths of the books in the average pastor's library and perhaps an equal proportion of his time and study in the seminary are devoted to sermons, sermon preparation, sermon material. But however important the work of the pulpit may be and however much it may be stressed, the effective pastor is far more than a preacher, or, in other words, he has a responsibility resting upon him to proclaim the Gospel in conversation and in

an individual service, day by day, during the week, which is every whit as much of a responsibility as is his duty of devoting himself to the highest ideals of pulpit presentation.

I am quite sure that the district superintendents and secretaries who come in touch with many ministers will testify that the outstanding cause of failure on the part of ministers is a failure to minister to the people in their homes. One superintendent said to me not long since that he had known many fine preachers to fail in advancement, but he had never yet known a careful pastor to lose his grip on his people or to fail to make a satisfactory advance in his life's work. Why so many pastors will neglect this prime requirement of their profession is beyond comprehension. It would seem that the average pastor would cherish above everything else his opportunities for pastoral service amid the homes and families of his people. In addition to the influence upon the people of the parish of thorough pastoral service there is also a deep influence upon the pastor himself.

One of America's outstanding pastors has said that after he has read along the lines of his intended sermon, before he preaches it to his people he must give himself to some thoroughgoing pastoral visitation where he will be brought into intimate touch with some of his people who are facing, not theoretical problems but the hard facts of actual existence. One of the difficult things that the average church secretary is called upon to do is to go from church to church after pastors have resigned and gone away

discouraged, leaving perhaps their people even more discouraged than they, and to hear from the people that the pastor was a mighty fine man, a good preacher, but he absolutely did not call on his people. A case comes to mind where the president of a board of trustees in making a request that a new pastor be recommended to the church, said this: "We do not care particularly about his pulpit ability, but we do want to know whether or not he will care for the souls of the people sufficiently to visit them in their homes, as the last pastor we had, who was here nine years, failed to call on some of the leading members of the church during his entire pastorate and so far as I know never called on a new family until they had shown a lively interest in the church."

In discussing this with a state superintendent, a man of delightful personality and beautiful home life, he said to me, "Do you know that I have been state superintendent for twenty years and in that time I have lived in four parishes; my wife and I have always been as regular attendants of the church where our membership happened to be as was possible, and in the entire twenty years not one single pastor that we have had, nor his wife, has ever set their foot within our door."

A certain minister of my acquaintance who is rated as one of the strongest preachers in the city, who was in demand continually as a speaker before commercial, social and college groups, announced to his congregation when he accepted the pastorate that he considered the day of pastoral calling past, but that if any of the members of the parish needed his

presence because of sickness or other reasons, and would send for him, he would be only too glad to serve them, and that he and his wife would try to return such calls as were made upon them. But as to other calling he felt that it was entirely needless and a trouble not only to the people but to himself, and he proposed to devote more of his time to sermon preparation and to study and contemplation, rather than chasing hither and yon over the parish. It is needless to say that in spite of his brilliant pulpit powers, his church lost in attendance, in interest, and he, himself, became discouraged and pessimistic and his resignation followed in due time. His successor was a man of very indifferent pulpit power, lacked in personal magnetism and eloquence, but he had a deep and abiding interest in the welfare of his congregation and was willing to show that interest by visiting the people and becoming one with them, sharing their trials and their hopes and their joys. Under his administration the congregations are almost double those of the more brilliant preacher who neglected his pastoral work.

In addition to what has been said of the pastor's visiting the homes, where he shares more than likely with the mother in interest, the anxiety and the problem of the children and home life, he should by no means neglect his visiting with the men of his church in their places of employment. As a usual thing men cannot devote very long time but it is not necessary to take a great deal of time, unless there is some special problem. The minister should call in the office of his business men, look into the factory of

his working men, walk across the farm of his farmer members, and chat briefly with his people. A minister who will walk down an alley in a factory to where one of his men in overalls is working day after day and will simply lay his hand on that man's shoulder and speak a word of encouragement to him as he grinds away with almost deadly monotony month after month, held to his grind by his love of family and ideals of industry, that minister will see a look of real gratitude in that man's eyes which will be as a benediction to him through the days to come.

Hence it is that a minister as he loves his own soul should be faithful to his duty to his people; to see them in their daily life, to encourage them and help them bear their burdens. Where this is the case most of the problems of that parish will be solved and the men and women who compose it will be tied together by enduring cords of love.

What is here described as "The Fall Visitation" and listed as part of the fall program ought to be in a way continuous; that is to say, the pastor will be finding new people whom he will look up in the same painstaking way as he has those of whom he learned through the fall activities. The fall offers an especially opportune time for this careful visitation, as the rush of the various programs is not so pressing and the gathering of names early in the year affords more opportunities for cultivation than when the visitation is made later in the winter. If this work is not started and carried as far as possible in the fall, it adds much to the complexity of the after-Christmas or pre-Lenten program.

The Fall Reception

Many churches plan for a fall reception of new members at the October or November communion. If the visitation has been carefully made it will be found especially advisable to follow with a fall reception of members, for the pastor will find families who are willing and ready to join the church at the first invitation either by letter or on confession. There will also be a number who though willing were prevented for one reason or another from uniting with the church at the Easter or spring communion, but who are now ready to become members. A surprisingly large number of people may be brought into the church at the fall communion. The pastor should prize such an ingathering very highly, not only because those who unite with the church in the fall gain what amounts to almost a full year of service, but also because such a reception will give tone and direction to the whole year's plan. It will center the thought of the church upon this fact—that the church has a clearly defined program with a definite aim, the enlisting of people in the worship and service of the church. The fall ingathering should be looked upon not as an end of any sort of a campaign, but as the beginning of the year's work of the church.

Results of the Fall Work

So the pastor will come to the holiday season having accomplished three definite things:

1. Through the Rally he has encouraged his peo-

ple to keep up the habit of regular churchgoing, and has assisted others to form the churchgoing habit.

2. Through the visitation he has secured the names and addresses of new families, with definite information concerning them without which his efforts are bound to be shots in the dark.

3. He has welcomed into the church all those who are willing to come, and by so doing given his people a vision of the possibilities of the year's program, and has registered clearly in the minds of the people his determination to carry through a practical plan of church work.

It is understood that during this period of the year, from September to December, the pastor will be busy with many other lines of church work—mission study, stewardship, the financial canvass, as well as his constant routine of parish duties. These activities, however, will all prove grist for his mill, for through them he may reach many men and women and help them to give expression to their religious faith. The pastor should feel that these features of church work instead of interfering with the evangelistic program are of the greatest helpfulness in developing that program along practical lines.

VI

JANUARY TO EASTER

THE work of the church during the January-to-Easter period while in some respects similar to that of the fall is in other respects radically different. The change of seasons brings usually a change in the attitude of the people towards life and its responsibilities. To most people the beginning of the calendar year is the beginning of a new era. Much of the thought of the people during the fall is devoted to the closing up of a year's work. This is true in business, on the farm, in factories, and in most kinds of work. During the fall months many persons are very busy in preparation for Christmas and the holidays and not many have time to look beyond this season of hurry. When the holiday time is past most people find themselves a bit out of breath, more or less lost as to time and direction; and they realize that they must now plan for another year's work. As with individuals, so with the church—new phases of the year's program with new objectives must be emphasized. Those who observe the Christian year will find a natural climax for the period following the holidays at the Easter season.

If the pastor and his committee have initiated at the beginning of the church year in September or October a thoroughgoing program, and have carried through in effective fashion the fall activities, their work will be simplified. For one thing, they will find that much of the inertia of the congregation will have been overcome and that the organization is feeling in all departments of its life new vigour and enthusiasm. As the program has progressed there will be developed the will to succeed, which is of the utmost necessity in accomplishing any worth-while piece of work. In the second place the pastor will find his committee becoming familiar with their tasks and there will be a growing unity of purpose on the part of those who are associated with him in this service. The fall work of the church will result in the members becoming united in support of the program of religious work for the commitment of men to Christ and their enlistment in the Christian life.

When the Program is Postponed Until January

It sometimes happens that there are valid reasons for not beginning the program of evangelism until after the New Year. Some pastors have found this advisable when the program was introduced for the first time, as the January-to-Easter period is especially favourable to an evangelistic program and people cooperate more readily. If the church has not worked to a year's program many pastors believe that it is wiser to concentrate on the January-to-Easter period for the first year, with the expectation that for the following year the program will be begun in the fall

and carried through the entire church year. There is a good deal of logic in this position, and if a pastor feels that his people are not united sufficiently in thought as to the object and methods of the evangelistic program to make the fall opening a success, it may be the best thing to concentrate on the part of the year which has everything in its favour and when the minimum of effort will bring the maximum of results. Where pastors follow this plan it is particularly advisable that the church clearly understands that the stress of the January-to-Easter period for one year is but the preparation for a full year's program for the next year. Again, there may be other reasons for postponing the opening of a program until after January—as a building enterprise, a change of pastors, a particular financial campaign, community movements, or a variety of other demands which seem to the pastor and his advisers to make unwise the initiation of the program until after the first of January.

Where this is the case, from whatever reason, it must be clearly in mind that what has been said as to the necessity of a program for the year in the opening chapters bears with equal weight upon the situation, and that if the Easter season is to mark a spiritual growth in the church and an increase in its influence in the community there must be well-laid plans and careful preparation. If the fall program has not been organized and carried through, two features of that program—the Church Rally and the careful Visitation—should receive special attention. The Church Rally is not nearly so advantageous after

the holidays as it is following the summer vacation, although some ministers use the "Week of Prayer" for the purpose of bringing people together for special meetings. In past years it was the custom in many churches to begin the year with a series of devotional or evangelistic meetings. Among the Methodist churches a custom of a January revival meeting was almost universal and in many parts of the country this plan is still followed. But more and more pastors are coming to realize that to carry through a successful series of meetings more preparation is required than can be given in the closing weeks of the year, and that it is more effective to plan the work, organize and train the people, for a series of meetings to be held previous to Easter. The Week of Prayer, however, does afford those who observe it an opportunity to rally the more serious-minded people and to secure their active cooperation in the program for the rest of the year.

The parish visitation which has been outlined as a part of the fall work, if omitted at that time, must receive attention now. A careful visitation of the parish, carried out in a thoroughgoing way, is absolutely essential to the success of the program whenever it is projected, for through it the church membership becomes unified, new people are discovered and new life brought into all departments of the work of the church. The people usually feel that if there is a cause in which the pastor and others feel sufficiently interested to come and talk over with them individually, it is surely of sufficient importance for them to give to it their best thought. And further-

more, without the information which the visitation makes available, much of the efforts of the pastor and the committee will be lost.

The Objects to be Accomplished in the January-to-Easter Period

Whether the program has been initiated in the fall and carried through in careful fashion, or whether it is to be initiated with the opening of the calendar year, the objects to be accomplished in the January-to-Easter period should be clearly in mind. *The first aim of the season's activities is that the people have a fresh conception of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.* Those who follow the church year, who believe in Christmas as commemorating the birth of Christ, Christ's struggle in temptation as remembered during the Lenten season, and His death and resurrection on Good Friday and Easter, have a splendid opportunity to review the whole life of Christ during this Christmas-to-Easter period. To accomplish this purpose there is first the program of preaching and second the pastor's training class.

The program of preaching for the January-to-Easter period should be definite, progressive, devotional and practical. The pastor who utilizes this period of the year to present a series of sermons dealing with the foundation principles of Christian belief will find his people growing in grace and knowledge. In his pulpit presentation the pastor is continually trying to give his people Christian doctrine and principles of Christian living, but we learn

slowly and a constant reviving of the fundamentals is necessary. Some one has said that the human mind can accept and assimilate but one new thought each day. Through the program of preaching of the January-to-Easter period there is offered an opportunity for the church to renew its teaching function in presenting the fundamentals of Christian belief, in appealing fashion, at the time when people are in most receptive mood.

While the pastor is accomplishing these things through the ministry of his pulpit, he will be doing the same things in more school-like fashion with the young people who form the pastor's training class. More and more pastors are feeling the responsibility for the religious training of their young people. They realize that the church school, with all its splendid curriculum and effective teachers, does not accomplish all that is desired. There is still work for him to do. It is his responsibility to bring together in logical fashion in the minds of the children the truths which they have received in the church school; to help the child to discover for himself the need as well as the reasonableness of religious faith; to help each child to consider the claims of Jesus for personal commitment to Him and by accepting Him to enter into a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the first object of the work of the January-to-Easter period is that of deepening the thought of the people about God, Christ, human life, sin, salvation and the eternal life, and this is to be accomplished in the main through the program of

preaching and with the young people through the pastor's training class.

The second object of the January-to-Easter period is to deepen the devotional life of the people, to encourage them to participate in prayer as individuals, in families, in neighbourhood groups and as a congregation. Prayer for the church as well as for the individual is the barometer of spiritual life.

The third object to be accomplished in this period is that members of the congregation may engage in personal service for Christ. To be able to do this the members should make a study of ways in which men come to decision about fundamental things of life, the reason why men of many generations and of many ages have found the Christian way of living the ideal life, and then put these things into practice through a program of personal work with individuals for Christ.

In these three lines of related activity by the pastor and his helpers the interest of the people will be increased and many will be led to a higher religious life as the work draws to a happy and glorious consummation in the Easter season.

The pastor who plans his work for the January-to-Easter period should consult with his committee from time to time during the closing weeks of the year, that the program may be initiated in early January with everything in its favour. Directly after the holidays, if not during some lull in the holiday season, when the committee can come together and discuss with the pastor the items of his work without pressure for time, there should be a thoroughgoing con-

ference of pastor and committee upon the following items:

1. The committee should be united in prayer for the success of the program. Members should be led to definite and regular prayer that the Holy Spirit may be present in power and that all that is done and said may be through his leadership. Nothing so cheers a pastor as to know that his advisers are praying with him and that all are praying together that individuals in the parish shall be brought to know Him "whom to know aright is Life Eternal."

2. The committee should advise as to the setting of a definite goal. The weight of testimony is that a goal gives direction to and centralizes effort. The goal if set should be attainable. By running over the list of names a pastor can decide this. The usual minimum goal is about ten per cent. of the membership. If a goal is set the fact should not be made much of in public. There is no question, however, but that the committee should set before itself the ideal of presenting the Gospel to every non-confessing individual in the parish for which the church is spiritually responsible.

3. The opportunities for lay service. In connection with this, attention is called to what is said on the following pages concerning the invitation or personal workers' committee.

4. The status of the Sunday-school. Definite plans should be made for reaching every boy and girl twelve years of age or older.

5. The planning of Prayer Circles.

6. The pastor may well consult the committee as to his sermons. He should have clearly in mind some definite themes which he expects to develop from week to week, and share with the committee in

advance the joy of forecasting the program of preaching. If he will do this he will add greatly to the inspiration of his committee and will strengthen in many ways his spiritual leadership. The committee will quite likely give timely advice as to the way in which the themes should be developed to bring definite results. The pastor who shares these things with his advisers will see many a layman develop into an enthusiastic worker whose companionship will be a source of strength.

VII

PROGRAM OF PREACHING

HOWEVER much the preacher may wander afield during the year, in his pulpit presentation during the Lenten period there must be a definite point to his work and a real program in the ministry of the pulpit.

The preaching of the January-to-Easter period should have at least two characteristics: First, there should be a definite evangelistic message in every pulpit presentation; and second, the thought presented through the sermons should be progressive and climactic. That is, that the sermons taken together should leave some definite convictions in the minds of the people that they may feel renewed in their thinking, not in a generalized, hazy way, but that certain fundamental principles of religion shall stand forth with clearness in their thought.

The Evangelistic Appeal

The vital part of the ministry of the pulpit is the spiritual message that engenders and enriches the life of the church. If this quality be lacking in the sermons the work of the church will be mechanical, temporary and disappointing, though the immediate

results may not show that there is no root because of the lack of depth.

As to what characterizes the evangelistic note there will be of course a variety of expressions, just as there will be a variety of definitions of the word "evangelism." Ask any group of ministers or church workers to define evangelism in brief and you are likely to have as many definitions as there are persons present. This does not arise from the fact that they do not know what evangelism is, but rather from the fact that evangelism is a word of such variety and richness of content that it has in reality all the meaning which the various definitions give it. The word is in reality like a diamond and these definitions are but the flashes from the different faces of the stone. I suppose the simplest definition for evangelism is, "that type of religious work through which men are brought in touch with God through Christ." In practice the definition should be broad enough to include all those processes and methods by which, or through which, the spiritual life of the church is renewed. This conception of evangelism is large enough to include various forms, educational, pastoral, missionary, or any other type of religious work through which, and by which, the spiritual life of men is deepened and enlarged. The evangelistic note which the ministry of the pulpit must sound during the Lenten period should result in bringing conviction to the hearts of men in revealing to them the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in leading them to accept this grace for themselves by entering into the life of the Spirit through Christ

Jesus our Lord. Every pastor will have his own way of doing this, but woven through the woof and fabric of the sermon presentation must be a spiritual appeal, wooing the hearts and minds of men.

In forecasting the program of preaching and preparing the outlines for the sermons the pastor must remember the contrasting phases of human life, the knowing, the doing, the being. As Browning has it, "What knows, What does, What is." Preaching must do more than appeal to the intellect. This applies no whit less to teaching than to preaching, for if the process of teaching simply leaves the pupil with a mind full of facts and has not led that pupil to commit himself to the truth which lies back of the facts, and gives them their reality, in such fashion as to enlarge his living and control his actions, then teaching has not resulted in character which is the goal of all true education.

The right relationship of the intellect to the center of being commonly called the heart has been a subject of study through the years and I am not at all sure from which the world has suffered more, from emotionalism without intelligent background or from an intelligence chilled by dying emotions. We have all known preachers in the days gone by who have acquired their power over the people through an emotional appeal. While it lasted this influence was very great but it was temporary. Their failure was because there was no depth of intellectual soil and the new resolutions and aspirations soon withered away. It must be held in mind, however, that the great guiding realities of life are apprehended far

more through the heart than through the intellect. Through the ages perhaps few of the martyrs could give a logical exposition of the truth for which they were willing to die but they went to their death singing hymns of joy because of whom they loved. It is the thing we love for which we are willing to make the great sacrifices of life, for the truths which we apprehend by the mysterious channel of love are held in a radically different way from the way in which we hold the truths apprehended by intellectual processes. As Pompilia says in Browning's "Ring and the Book," "I cannot see the way but I put forth my foot and by foot-feel I test; bear weight and pass on."

The pastor in seeking to reach the springs of human life cannot neglect the appeal to the heart, for however plausibly he may present Christianity, however convincingly he may arrange his syllogisms, unless his appeal reaches beyond the intellect to the heart and there is in addition to an intellectual assent to the truth of the proposition the commitment of one's life, preaching will fall far short of accomplishing what it should. This is but saying again what former Vice-President Marshall said in his farewell to the Senate, "But underneath the man of brain there is another man, the man of heart, and I have found that the heart is wiser than the intellect and works with swifter hands and surer feet towards wiser conclusions." Or as Solomon put it, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life," "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he."

This is said with no thought of minimizing the contribution of modern scholarship to the knowledge of the world. Any man who assumes to be a teacher or leader of men in any field, especially in the field of religion, who is negligent in securing the best possible education or who fails to keep himself as near abreast current thought as possible, is unworthy of his position. But let us feel that however true we keep our preaching to the teachings of history and philosophy, to the sciences and to experience in other departments of life, and however thoroughly we have convinced our people of the truth of these things, we have not yet gone far enough. Some one has well said that the world to-day has more truth than it knows what to do with. What the world needs along with its truth is also a determination to live the truth which the mind accepts.

How then is our preaching to have this prime requisite, that is the power of reaching the springs of being—the heart? The answer is simple; this is what the minister contributes by his own life, by what he is himself. It is this quality which makes a pulpit presentation a sermon rather than an essay. The essay is knowledge, the sermon is knowledge plus whatever the pastor has in his own life and his own spiritual experience that he can contribute to the lives of others. Hence it goes without saying that if preaching is to have its life-giving quality, the preacher himself must be a truly spiritual man; one who has entered into the holy of holies, whose spirit is so knit up with the Spirit of God, so sensitive to His leadings that it comes to be, not the preacher

who speaks but God who speaks through him. The truth of this can come only through experience and with every individual it is a new experience. It costs a man little in spiritual effort to stand before a group of people and to read an essay, except the painstaking research for truth and the skilful fashioning of the facts together, giving them proper form and voicing them to the people. The true preacher goes before his people with his truths clearly outlined, skilfully fashioned together and becomingly clothed and he uses this all, not as an end in itself, but that in and through it his own soul may lift the souls of his people into the presence of God. No wonder a preacher's soul burns within him until he delivers his message and after his message is delivered, his spirit is exhausted.

This leads to one further observation which applies not only to evangelistic preaching but to all effective preaching, and that is that the message both in spoken word and in soul outreach must be a ministry of one individual to another individual. A generalized, impersonal pulpit presentation will not avail. In the old days it is said that medical doctors, though they might have many bottles on their shelves, used one of four remedies. If we go back beyond the primitive doctor to the days of witchcraft, we find that the witch doctor used only one method for all diseases. Modern medicine depends, for its wonderful success in curing bodily ills, upon the careful diagnosis of the individual ailment and skilful prescription for that one disease. The efficient pastor, however large his congregation or extended his parish,

must realize that his own success will be measured by the same standards; that is, by his ability to minister to the individual needs of his people.

The story is told of ex-President Roosevelt that in one of his earliest meetings he was faced by a vast company and after speaking a short time he felt the attention of the people wandering away from him. He saw sitting in front of him an elderly gentleman with a G. A. R. bronze button in the lapel of his coat. As soon as he saw him Mr. Roosevelt cried out, "You, my brother in the fifth row with that bronze button in your lapel, you know that what I am saying is true, how, when, etc." Immediately Mr. Roosevelt had the attention of the vast throng and he kept it as long as he addressed his remarks either to that one individual or to some other individual, either real or imaginary, whom he was trying to reach. Afterwards Mr. Roosevelt said that he owed whatever success he had as a public speaker to his constant effort to speak to the individual, however large his audience was. The truth of this observation lies in the fact that our problems are largely individual problems. You can take any one, anywhere, however prosperous and contented he may be, and if you will sit down with him quietly and go over his experience with life, winning his confidence and esteem, you will come finally to the discovery that in that person's heart is a fear, a sorrow, a burden, something which weighs down upon his life. Now it is this individual burden which Christ came to bear and it is this burden that He asks be given to Him. So the pastor in presenting his appeal to the hearts of

men must so present it that the individual will feel that it is his fear, his sorrow, his burden that Christ is able and anxious to minister unto.

The pastor who seeks to lead his people in a program of parish evangelism should make every effort that the preaching of the pre-Lenten period in particular have these qualities: that his presentation of the truth may reach beyond an intellectual assent and touch the heart, the center of life, and there bring about personal commitment; and also that the preaching have an individual appeal, that is that the soul of the preacher speak directly to the soul of the individual and lead that individual to accept the love and life of Jesus as the guiding influence of his own life.

In general the character of the preaching must be such that all will understand the Gospel of Christ with its boundless implications for individual righteousness and social justice. The great themes of religious thinking should be presented with freshness and vigour: How we may know God; What He does for us; The Reality of Good and Evil; What the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ; Redemption through Him, and how He helps those who follow Him; How Communion with God is effected—its purpose and hindrances; Human Life with its upward reach towards God, and its outward reach towards mankind; the many ways in which modern paganism and materialism bind men's thoughts; Jesus' teachings of the idealism of life—that it is possible to mingle in busy affairs of the day and yet to live one's secret life in the calm assurance of fellowship with the

Holy Spirit which broods over the lives of men with boundless love and sympathy.

In the development of these themes, the pastor should make clear the responsibility which rests upon each individual to win others to the Christian life, and also the great duty which rests upon the church to train its young people and to lead them into the fulness of the Christian experience. He will find many opportunities to explain how the evangelistic program seeks to make effectual this primary aim of the church.

In all this the advice of his committee will be of the greatest value. There are certain functions which rest upon the pastor alone, others which belong to the people and others still which rest on pastor and people. It is his duty to proclaim the truth of the Gospel, but to make that proclamation effective he needs the help of his people. So many pastors feel their work is done when the Gospel is preached. To a large extent people do believe the truth of the Gospel—the failure lies in the fact that the truth is not presented with individual application, and the commitment of men to the truth is not secured. To make his ministry personal the committee can advise the pastor in many effective ways if he will help them to understand his ideals and give them an opportunity to counsel with him.

VIII

THE PASTOR'S TRAINING CLASS

THE Pastor's Training Class is usually a feature of the Lenten period of church work. Many pastors use the six weeks of Lent, others conduct the class from January to Easter, while others have their class after Easter. This feature of church work is of the greatest value and is growing rapidly in favour of pastor and people.

The Pastor's Training Class is the class conducted by the pastor for children to study the fundamentals of Christian belief. The course seeks to present the Christian way of living as the best way and that Christian character is developed by living according to Christian ideals. It is expected, of course, that as a result the boys and girls will be led to make a decision for Christ, and that having committed themselves to Him and to the leadership of His Spirit, they will seek membership in the church.

The Purpose of the Pastor's Class

When boys and girls reach the age of twelve to fifteen years they begin to think more seriously about life; they begin to understand that some people live good and useful lives and that others do not. Children at this period usually respond readily to a religious and ethical appeal. They are peculiarly sus-

ceptible to influence, good or bad, and the fundamental decisions made during these years generally continue their effect through life. The child is developing his own distinct personality, with his likes and dislikes, with his loves and hates; and there is forming in the child consciousness, vaguely perhaps, the ambition to be and to do something worth while. With these thoughts in mind, pastors in many churches and of many denominations have been for years using the Pastor's Instruction Class or Pastor's Training Class as one means of reaching boys and girls at this age and of enlisting them in the Christian life. It is the universal testimony of pastors who have used this method that efforts put forth in this way bring about permanent results in larger proportion than efforts put forth in other lines of church work.

The purpose of the Pastor's Training Class is, in brief, simply this: To bring together the boys and girls for a series of friendly, personal conferences with the pastor, that he may explain in a reasonable way what the Christian life is, how it is entered and how it is lived; that the Christian way is normal and natural; that Christian character results from living one's daily life in the Christian way, and that the boys and the girls who yield to the spirit of Christ and to His leadership will find themselves being strengthened in purpose, purified in thought and developed in Christian character.

Enrollment

The method of organizing the class, used by many

pastors, is this: Some time before the opening of the Lenten season the pastor, with the help of his Sunday-school teachers and his church visitors, makes a very careful survey of the names of those connected with the various church organizations, including the Sunday-school and young people's organizations, to ascertain what children over twelve years of age in the parish are not communicants of the church. The hearty coöperation of the Sunday-school teachers is absolutely essential to the success of the class.

Most pastors make special calls at the homes of the girls and boys whom they wish to enroll in the class, for the purpose of explaining the plans to the parents. These visits in the homes present a number of problems and give the pastor a fine opportunity of clarifying his own mind as well as that of the parents as to the reasons for the existence of the class. He is called upon to explain to the parents his attitude towards the Christian life, also wherein the child will be benefited by being a Christian and a member of the church, and why it is that the church is of practical helpfulness in everyday life.

Of course, where the church has maintained pastor's classes in the past, the organization and development will be familiar to most of the people in the parish. It is the universal testimony of ministers who have conducted pastor's classes that the finest advertisement the class receives is the enthusiastic support of those who in previous years have enjoyed its delightful fellowship. But even in communities where the method is familiar there will be new families to interest and new problems arising which will

give the minister the best possible opportunity for presenting the church, its work, its teachings, and its worship to the parents of his constituency. Pastors everywhere affirm that most parents are quickly drawn to the minister who shows a real interest in their children, and if he will manifest a reasonable and sensible attitude, and make it clear that he has the interest and welfare of the children at heart, he will find that he has the coöperation of the majority of parents.

It is to be noted, however, that there will be found parents who will not endorse the program, nor desire that their children attend, for fear that the children may be subjected to influences stronger than they can withstand and be forced into decisions regarding the Christian life which they are not ready to make. In such cases pastors are very careful to impress upon parents the fact that even if their children should join the class, no undue pressure will be put upon them to join the church, and that while it is hoped that the course on instruction, and particularly the personal association with the pastor will lead to a decision for the Christian life, yet children who do not so decide will be just as welcome and will be treated with the same consideration as those who do decide to unite with the church and that there will be no shadow resting upon those who do not so decide, but all will have the pastor's friendship in like measure. If the natural leaders among the boys and girls are interested, and are asked to assist in enrolling the other children of the community, the problem may be simplified.

Time and Place of Meeting

When the children are enrolled many pastors divide them into two classes, one for the boys and one for the girls. Some pastors use Saturday morning for the boys and the afternoon for the girls. Some pastors use the regular Sunday-school hours; others use Sunday afternoon, Wednesday night or different periods of the week. The classes generally continue for six, eight or twelve weeks, ending usually with Easter, when those who have decided to unite with the church are publicly received into membership. In passing it may be well to mention that a number of churches conduct a special reception service for the young people coming into the church through the pastor's class. The church, by having a special service for the reception of young people who unite through the Pastor's Training Class, gives a real evidence of its interest in the religious life of the children, and by means of such a service registers the event in the minds of the people in a way which is not easily forgotten.

The Method of Instruction

Most ministers use a very simple method of instruction in conducting the pastor's class, that is, a friendly, frank, open discussion led by the pastor. Some pastors have found the use of little manuals very helpful. Samples of these may be had from the denominational headquarters of the various communions. The class exists for the purpose of giving the children a clear understanding of some of the fundamentals of the Christian belief and of stimu-

lating the desire for Christian living. It is common testimony that the conversational method directed by the pastor in which each boy and girl is urged to express frankly and fully his or her own questions and ideas, will bring better results than any formal course of instruction. At the same time, the pastor's leadership must not be aimless and he must have in his own mind a definite goal. A successful method used by many a pastor is to secure copies of all available leaflets giving courses of instruction, and then to make up his own outline from various suggestions.

Home Study

In addition to the discussions in the class, pastors more and more are finding it advisable to outline some form of home study for the boys and girls. Some of the items that have been found useful for such study are, memorizing the names of the books of the Old and New Testament; the reading of the book of Ruth or Esther; the book of Jonah; certain chapters in the book of Mark or one of Paul's letters.

The idea of this home work is to give the child a little elementary knowledge of what is in the Bible, how to use it and where to find some of the most interesting stories. This object, of course, can be gained more readily if the child is directed to read in the Bible assigned portions rather than to have these sections printed in a small manual.

A number of pastors have found that the use of a manual covering certain topics of the question and answer method helpful. While the children may not

be required to memorize the question and answer, they should be familiar with the subject matter both of question and answer. Pastors using this plan find that if given a brief and simple catechism the children will naturally think out many things for themselves.

A Suggested Course of Study

From the various suggestions and experiences of other ministers as found in these manuals and leaflets, a pastor can develop his own course of instruction. The course ought to cover in general the following headings:

First. What the Bible teaches us about God; what He does for us; the reality of good and evil.

Second. What the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ; Redemption through Him and how He helps those who follow Him.

Third. How communion with God is effected; its purpose, hindrances, and forms of great prayers.

Fourth. The Universal Church of Christ: Its beginnings in the days of the Fathers and development through the ages; the meanings of its sacraments and ceremonies, communion and baptism.

Fifth. The history and main teachings of the denomination. The reasons why many men and women in different ages have found it helpful in its spirit, simple and natural in its organizations.

Sixth. The organization of the local church, its officers and their duties, its members and their privileges. What it means to confess Christ and unite with His Church, this to be followed with a personal conference with each child.

Any outline of instruction can only be suggestive and it is understood that many subjects of prime interest are included by implication and will come up for discussion in the class periods.

Securing Decision

As the class draws to a close and the pastor has established a very cordial and intimate relationship with the children so that they are frank with him and he understands them, he is prepared to present to each child in a personal conference the question of the child's own personal acceptance of the principles of the Christian faith, and to ascertain if the child is willing to undertake to live according to his best understanding of the Christian life and be guided by the advice and counsel of the Christian Church. Here is where the pastor comes into one of the richest experiences of his pastoral life, for having gained the confidence, good-will and trust of the child, he now has the privilege of leading that trusting mind to a conscious acceptance of Christ; and while this acceptance is based on but elementary knowledge of Christian doctrine, it can be so rich in the love of Christ that the decision thus made will be the turning point in the child's life, and all his after years will be directed and influenced by this high choice. When without excitement and without undue pressure the decision is made, the pastor will consecrate forthwith in his own prayer and in his own way the trusting confidence and new-born faith, thus teaching dependence upon Christ Himself. If the child is not ready to decide this final matter, or

hesitates for any reason, the pastor should respect this state of mind and be willing that taking the further step should be deferred until the child is absolutely sure in his own mind that that is what he wants to do. Many pastors find that such children frequently join the class again the next year, at the close of which they unite with the church.

Having secured, therefore, such confessions as are willingly made, the pastor will prepare to receive these children into the church. As has been mentioned, some pastors have found that a special recognition service for the boys and girls coming from the pastor's class is one of the most helpful services of the whole church year and makes a deep impression upon the whole community. When the children are formally received into church membership, at a later date pastors generally find it their pleasure to present each child with a neat certificate of membership, or a Testament or Bible, as a reminder of this significant event.

The General Results in the Parish

The results of the Pastor's Training Class are out of all proportion to the size of the class or the length of the period of instruction, for it does two very definite things: It draws the parents of the community to the church in a new way, for they feel that the pastor is in partnership with them on a subject that lies very near their hearts—the welfare of their children. Many a wide-awake pastor has found that when a child enters the instruction class and begins to take a real interest, it is quite an easy matter to

interest the mother and father if the parents are not already church members, and that they, too, will come with the child into the church. One pastor reported that among the accessions one Easter in his church there were twelve fathers and fourteen mothers who joined the church with the children as a direct result of that year's Pastor's Training Class, and the class numbered only thirty.

The second very definite result is that it defines the purpose of the church and particularly the Sunday-school in the minds of the church workers to win results for Christ and they begin to see the value of a definite program of such church work directed to certain attainable ends.

IX

PERSONAL WORK

For Pastor and People

THE phrase "personal work" means individual work for individuals. It is simply making practical application of the teachings of the church through personal influence. In personal work, either by pastor or people, there is a conscious effort to present the Gospel of Christ and the appeal to Christian living so as to meet the needs of the individual and show that individual what the Christian faith will mean to him.

Personal work should be continuous but because of the favourable atmosphere during the pre-Easter period it is usually found more fruitful at this period of the year than at any other. Without such special effort the best results of the year's work of the church by pastor and people cannot be harvested.

The effectiveness of the personal service of the people depends quite largely upon what the preacher has been able to accomplish through his pulpit ministry. Helpful results for personal work should follow the ministry of the pulpit. In the first place the pastor in his pulpit will have schooled the workers in the knowledge and spirit which they are to carry into their service.

The minister who plans an effective program of personal work should seek so to influence occasional attendants at the worship of the church and at other services that they may be ready for the personal appeal. He will make the religious life attractive both by what he says and by the way he lives. The religious life will be presented as the best life—that is, life coming to its best; religion as not simply something put on at pleasure but as a consistent and conscientious expression of the inner life of faith and love. In addition to these more personal applications of the Gospel to human life, he will inform his people of the great foundation principles of the Christian belief. By bringing these convictions clearly to the consciousness of his people the pastor will open the way for those who are to work under his direction in helping to secure the decision of people to seek God until they find Him.

Not only will the pastor be preparing the way with individuals but he will be speaking many helpful words to the members of his congregation who will join in the program of personal work. He will give these workers a fresh understanding of religion in the common life, a new vision of God and of man's need for Him, that they may be able to present a true picture of the life which Christ Jesus demanded. The pastor who desires to lead his people in a program of personal work will find that his more effective sermons are those which deal with the fundamentals of Christian belief and the homely virtues of daily living. Upon the effectiveness of the pulpit presentation depends in large measure the ef-

ficiency of his personal workers as they work with him to win men to Christ.

Who Are to be Personal Workers?

In planning the program of personal work the membership or evangelistic committee will be of growing helpfulness. In some churches this committee is composed of the personal workers' band, but frequently it is found advisable for the evangelistic committee or the pastor to set up a special committee or to enroll those who are willing to give personal service in a personal workers' group. This particular group may be known as the Personal Workers' Committee, Life Service Band, or as the Invitation Committee, a name growing in favour in the churches as indicating the function of the group.

Perhaps the most effective method of setting up the group is for the pastor to select certain of his men and women and young people on whom he feels that he can count for service, those who have influence in the community as a result of their way of living and tact and kindly attitude towards others, and to invite these individuals either to his own home or to the church parlours for a conference. When all are together the pastor should present his ideals of individual work, just what he expects them to do, what to say to their friends, and acquaintances, how to go about the work and what results to expect from those they seek to interview. He then should secure the consent of as many as will agree to make a study of methods of personal work and to devote some time to this service for a limited period. It will be

found easier as a rule to enroll workers for a period of from six weeks to three months than if the term be left indefinite.

The active invitation committee, if not a part of the general committee, should be kept informed and should advise with the pastor as to the personnel as well as the method of work. It is the common testimony of pastors that the work of the personal workers' group is hindered if there is much publicity concerning the appointment and work of the committee. It is not necessary for many of the people of the church outside the group directly concerned to know who are the ones that are pledging themselves to this definite type of service. The personal workers' band or group, or invitation committee, or by whatever name known, should be composed of those men and women of standing in the community and in the church who by gifts and graces will be able to do satisfactory work and who are willing to give a portion of their time for a limited period to this service under the direction of the pastor.

The members should be selected with great care, for their duty is the securing of the decision of others to enlist in the Christian life, and to enter the service and worship of the Christian Church. A brief study of the art of salesmanship will convince any one that the ability to secure the decision of another willingly and gladly to do that which he had not planned, is the foundation of success in business. Such ability is no less necessary for success in the fine art of winning others to the discipleship of Jesus Christ. The committee therefore should be composed

of those who have in addition to a deep religious life the tact, the determination and the ability to win.

Sub-Committees

It is helpful to organize sub-committees which limit their activities to certain groups. For example, a men's invitation committee to work with the men of the community, and a woman's committee to work with the women. As has been well said, men are learning how to win other men "of their own size," and it is heartening to know that some of our strongest bankers, merchants and lawyers are giving their time to win to the discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ other bankers, merchants and lawyers.

What the Workers Are to Do

Those who are to give themselves to personal work are to do two things—first, study; second, serve.

Much of the effectiveness of their service will depend upon their equipment and training and they should be willing to begin with the more elementary phases of the work and as they gain in experience extend their activities. It should be said in passing that except in rare cases individuals working in the local congregation and in behalf of the local church should work in the closest coöperation with the pastor and in all they seek to do should be constantly on their guard to give the impression that they are speaking for the pastor and under his instruction. In the vast majority of cases the putting of the final questions and the securing of decisions should be left to the pastor. As one pastor put it, "I use my faithful

workers continually, but when a soul is born into the Kingdom I want to be there." There are obvious reasons why this final task should be left to the pastor. In exceptional cases definite decisions may be secured by men and women of the laity but they should be reported immediately to the pastor, who should lose no time in calling upon those making the decisions, that he may strengthen them in the position they have taken.

While the final phases of personal work are best left to the pastor himself, this does not in any way lessen the dignity nor the importance of the work that is to be done by the individuals. The members of the personal workers' band should begin perhaps first by securing attendance at the services of the church, Sunday-school and other organizations. It should be borne in mind that with rare exception an individual who has not attended the church or any of its organizations before uniting with that church, will be rather difficult to secure as a regular attendant after he has united with the church. So the first duty for personal workers is to build new people into the congregation and church organizations.

The second task which naturally will fall to the personal workers is that they help to make people who occasionally attend the church feel at home and helped by the participation in the worship of the congregation. To the average man it is a rather momentous decision when he really decides to attend the service of a certain church. This is an act which ought to be looked upon by churches as of great significance, for it is usually the surface evi-

dence of a sincere desire for a change in living. I am speaking here of course of those who formerly have not been members of the church, and not particularly of those newcomers to the community who have been members of the church in other years and now are considering the transfer of their membership from one church to another, but rather of those who are to be won for the first time to Christian worship and service. So when, through invitation or inner promptings, such a person goes to church he is making a very significant advance which, if met in the right way, will be of the greatest importance in the life of that individual.

When people go to church they go for the most part that they may receive courage and strength through worship and the fellowship of the congregation. In days gone by this was accomplished through doctrinal sermons and through class or group meetings where, in a rather formal fashion, public inquiry was made by the class leader into the needs of one's soul and testimony was given by worshippers as to their own spiritual experience. To-day this encouragement comes through the sermon and service of worship and in other rather informal ways, but which may be no less effective. Courage comes through the friendly faces, the hand-clasp, the word of greeting, in short through the recognition on the part of others of one's desire to be and do the right thing. This is to say, our encouragement and fellowship are expressed in perhaps the more subtle ways of social usage and the church should feel as much a responsibility in this day for expressing its

message of cheer through the means which are used to-day as did the church in the olden time for its class meeting and other forms of grace.

The next step for those who are doing personal work is to seek a few individuals and to present to them the Christian way of living. Here the personal worker will find his influence depending upon two things at least. First of all his own personal religious experience. When he sits down to talk with another about religion he will find that his theories do not have much influence. That which will give his words validity, and give him an influence far beyond his words, is his own religious experience. If he has come to know God in Christ as a personal Father, a God of love, of forgiveness and of mercy as Jesus has revealed Him, and if the worker has entered into a deepening acquaintance so that he speaks literally with God, and has learned how to apprehend God speaking to him, he will have the first and great requirement for personal work.

In the second place he will find his efficiency determined somewhat by his knowledge of men. He will be greatly helped if he understands how people come to a decision concerning the more vital things of life—the elements which the average person considers when reaching a conclusion—and above all else how to lead another to try for himself the Christian way of knowing God. He will be greatly helped if he will study some good text-book on personal work and of methods used by others. These will be valuable as testimony, but he should be on his guard against a too literal use of another's plan. His own

method as he develops it through his own experience will be better. He should aim at a normal and natural form of religious work.

If a Christian man who really gets something worth while out of his religion will apply the common sense and practical methods of carrying to another what he himself has found of value, he will succeed. There is no magic or sleight-of-hand that will win permanent results. But it does require a full and sympathetic understanding of another's view-point and the meeting of him on his level and then with tact, with love, with patience, leading him to the acceptance of Christ's offer of the gift of the Spirit. The conversion of a soul is a mystery of mysteries. It is the work of the Spirit, and every worker should be on his guard not to try to force a mechanical or premature decision.

Finding Christ

As has been well said, there are three ways to find Christ—the way of love, of faith and of obedience. Some enter by one avenue; some by another. Some see the beauty of Christ in picture, or in story, and loving Him, acquire faith and follow Him by obedience. Others learn of Him by faith through belief in the testimony of others and then come to love Him and to obey Him. And still others come to Him through obedience, learn His law and obey Him, and come in time to the fulness of faith and the richness of love. Our part in leading another to Christ is that of introduction. We are to testify to what the Christian life is to us, and explain as far

as we understand the reality of the spiritual life, until the seeker desires to know Christ and to follow Him. "He that seeketh, findeth."

The Committee at Work

The pastor who has been following through the year a regular program will find a number of the things he has been doing of the greatest helpfulness to his plan for personal work. For example, from his surveys or parish visitation he will have the names of a large number of men and women who ought to be reached and will also have enough information about them to give to his helpers a good many suggestions as to how to proceed in individual cases. It must be remembered that when it comes to winning men and women to the discipleship of Christ the same rule holds good as in other relations of life; that is, that decisions are made one by one, and people are won as individuals, not in mass.

So the pastor leading his committee will want to consider his people as individuals, and help his workers to grasp his own ideals. It is often thought advisable that the worker and the pastor alone know for whom the member of the committee is working. Discussion of names and conditions and personalities should not be had in the large group, although it is helpful for the pastor to conduct from time to time general meetings of all those who are assisting him in personal work, for discussions of principles and methods of winning others.

X

DEEPENING THE PRAYER LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

IT is evident to all religious workers that their effectiveness depends on their prayer life. Prayer is the life of religion. Without vital prayer all methods of religious work are but temporary experiments. One of the crying needs of church work to-day is for more prayer. This chapter deals not so much with the need of prayer and the substance of prayer as with methods that have been used by pastors to develop among their people the practice of prayer.

Why Do Not Christians Pray More in Public?

To a praying person prayer seems a natural form of expression, and speaking to God a normal part of his daily life. Whether the prayer be offered in private or in public, to one accustomed to prayer the forms and words are usually easily at hand which will serve as an adequate vehicle for the thought the one who prays desires to express. It is sometimes difficult for some Christians to understand why other Christians, who live consistent lives, hesitate to offer public prayer. Let a pastor try this simple experiment: let him imagine himself standing before his congregation and suddenly called upon to offer a

public prayer, using the language of everyday life—that is, not using the classical words "thou," "thee," "wilt" and such terms which to one who prays frequently form the natural prayer vocabulary—and he will discover that in thinking of forms his thought of substance is very much handicapped.

Now to the average man or woman accustomed to the use of everyday English there may be a very great hesitance to pray publicly because of a feeling of inability to use the accepted forms of expression. Those who hesitate in public prayer may not realize what it is that embarrasses them when they think of offering a public prayer, but if a pastor will analyze the situation he will find that his people, those whom he naturally expects would lead in public prayer and who do not pray publicly, do communicate with God through silent prayer, prayers which would be of great helpfulness to others but which the man or woman hesitates to express, not only from a natural timidity that one unaccustomed to hearing his own voice in public will have, but also from a feeling of unfamiliarity with the accepted language of prayer.

No doubt Jesus faced this same situation in His day when He gave Himself to the task of teaching His followers how to pray. You will notice that in His instructions to them, He first gave them His ideals of the substance of prayer, the things for which people should pray to God. He taught them the futility of long and ornate prayers as were used by religious leaders of that day, and encouraged His followers to use rather the simple thoughts of everyday life and with sincere voice to utter the aspira-

tions of the soul for communication with God. When He had taught them these things He gave them a prayer model which through all the years has been used by Christians as the ideal form of prayer. When the pastor seeks to lead his people in the deepening of the prayer life he will do well to follow the example of Christ.

What is Prayer?

Perhaps one of the most inclusive definitions of prayer is found in the old hymn, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,"

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed,
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.

O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray.

10225

You will notice in this hymn that there are many definitions of prayer, all of them true. One pastor, who has been very effective as a religious teacher, gave a series of Sunday evening meditations with this hymn as a basis, taking up in successive evenings the various conceptions which these serve to illustrate—that sincere prayer is the conscious outreach of the human soul to God. A pastor who gives his people the true meaning of prayer will find that he has done much to make their religious life natural, sweet and effective.

I think it goes without saying that the great majority of people believe in prayer. Any one who has been present at a time of shipwreck or accident, serious sickness or any other crisis of life, will recall how the thoughts of all, though hardened men and abandoned women might be present, were turned instinctively to prayer. How natural it is at such a time for a stricken soul or a bewildered person to voice a prayer to God. If we had the power to look into the secret life of the men and women who throng the busy streets, the stores and factories, we might be greatly surprised to find how frequently these people, many of whom never see the inside of a church, lift their thoughts to God. Though their thoughts of the personality of God may be very hazy and indistinct and the prayers they offer may be timid and half-hearted, nevertheless many a human soul reaches towards God who broods over the lives of men in matchless love and sympathy.

Those who have gone through periods of indifference or who have been reared in ignorance of God

and of Christian teachings and practice and who have later come into Christian life, all unite in testimony that these observations are true to their own experience. Let the pastor or religious worker who doubts the truth of these statements sit down with some non-churchgoing friend and talk with that person sympathetically and honestly and see if it is not true that this one feels in his own heart and life some union with God through his own secret, timid prayers.

When we turn our thoughts to the topic " How to Pray," we must be willing to recognize that people with different individualities and different requirements will pray in different ways. When Jesus taught His prayer to His disciples we are not told that He called upon them to assume any position of reverence, or that He closed His eyes or asked them to close theirs, and yet we know His prayer was sincere and true. At the same time we should remember that Jesus did have certain places to which He retired for prayer—as in the wilderness or in the garden. Again we know that when He stood before the hungry multitude He lifted His eyes to heaven and prayed looking upward. I suppose we all feel that the position one takes in prayer has very little to commend it other than if one is accustomed either to kneeling, standing or bowing the head that he can in this way more easily free his mind from outward circumstances and concentrate his thoughts on God.

One present-day writer whose books on prayer have been of great help to many has said that for himself his most helpful place for prayer is usually the crowded subway or the railway train, and that

as he travels he is accustomed to give himself to long periods of most helpful prayer. And many other leaders of religious life testify that they are helped in phrasing their thought by continuing some natural habit, either of posture, place or time. We should help our people to see that these considerations are entirely subordinate. I am not at all sure but that if the time comes when we break away from the classical language of old English and use rather the language of everyday life we shall also contribute to the ease with which people will learn the art of prayer. The fact that time, position and language are entirely subordinate should help us to emphasize this one outstanding fact—that prayer should be the natural and sincere expression of one's inmost thought to God, in a natural and personal fashion. We should do all we can to cultivate the attitude of the people towards God and towards prayer which will make such an expression of their deeper thoughts, their longings, aspirations, fears, hopes and loves, an essential part of their daily life.

Every pastor should seek in all ways to impress upon his people the absolute necessity of regular prayer as a means of grace; that prayer is the greatest force for grace and power in the Christian life; that every man should be his own priest and that there is no other way to grow in grace or to live a consistent Christian life than through the power of prayer. Let his people accept such forms and times and methods as by experience best satisfy their spiritual needs. The experience of the world is to the effect that there are no powerful Christians except

praying Christians, and that any Christian who remains steadfast in prayer will have power with God and man far beyond his greatest hope.

To lead his people into an active prayer life the pastor will do well to follow Christ's example and give his people certain prayer models, some of the great historic prayers of the Church which should be memorized with the same fidelity with which we teach our children the Lord's Prayer. Perhaps the pastor himself will care to formulate a few prayers and teach these to his people; or he may have some of them write out a prayer or two for themselves and memorize them. Many times hesitating men and women can be led into the habit of public prayer by first having brief prayers to memorize and to use on appropriate occasions. It will not be long before a man so led will find himself improvising and adding to his memorized prayer, until little by little he will be able to stand alone and trust himself to express his prayer thoughts in appropriate fashion in public.

As the pastor leads his people in thinking of prayer the inevitable question must be answered—In addition to the value to the one who prays, of what practical value is prayer anyway? To this question there can be but one answer and that is the answer of experience. What has been your experience or the experience of others in testing the efficiency of prayer? In a recent meeting with pastors this subject was under discussion and two pastors gave interesting bits of testimony. One was to this effect: That he was satisfied that while we know something of the power of prayer, we know as little how to

make that great power available in the lives of people as did the ancients who knew that electricity was in the universe, but were entirely ignorant of its practical uses. He followed this observation with a story about the way in which he had found prayer effective. He had been called recently to the sick-bed of a little child; the doctor had given up hope; the father and mother and pastor had one hope—the hope of prayer. They continued in fervent prayer together all night long; the next morning when the doctor came to the bedside of the child he turned to the parents with the words, "Some miracle has happened here; this child is getting well."

This man was followed by another pastor who testified that he too had been called by parents of a child who was seriously ill. The mother was prostrate but the father with clinched teeth and gripped fists said to the pastor, "We cannot let this child die. I will go crazy if she does. If there is anything in prayer, now let us pray." This father and pastor likewise continued during the night in earnest prayer. Towards morning the nurse called the father to come to the bedside of the child as she felt the child's soul was going out to God. The father stood on one side of the bed and the pastor on the other, each one holding a hand of the little child, and her soul did go out to God. As soon as the last pulse of life had ceased the father turned to the pastor with all the hardness and bitterness gone out of his face, saying, "I am reconciled, for I feel that there has gone from my hand directly to the hand of God the dearest messenger that ever was sent from earth to heaven."

From that day to this both that father and mother have been greatly blessed by the peace and faith which came to them through the experience of life and death, and life in the Spirit.

The minister who looks through his personal acquaintance and keeps in mind his own experience in religious work will find many interesting pieces of testimony which will do much to strengthen his people to have faith in prayer, for Tennyson's words are true—"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

"The Fellowship of Prayer"

During recent years many churches have been helped in their evangelistic work by the use of the Lenten prayer booklet, "The Fellowship of Prayer." It is the purpose of this booklet to assist pastors to organize and to direct the prayer life of the parish that all the features of the work of the church will be undergirded with spiritual power. The prayer calendar provides a brief outline for study, meditation and prayer by suggesting the use of passages of Scripture, a hymn and a meditation dealing with some phase of the Christian life. If the "Fellowship of Prayer" is not used some other prayer booklet will be found most helpful. Such a prayer booklet is an aid to *individuals* as a program to private devotions and as a guide in establishing and maintaining the regular habit of private prayer.

"The Fellowship of Prayer" is helpful for *family worship*. A pastor can be of much help to his people by having available such a booklet to put into the

families where family prayer has long been neglected, as the prayer booklet offers a practical program for family worship.

The booklet may also be used for the *regular prayer meeting* as well as group prayer meetings wherever these are held. The organization of a number of group, neighbourhood or cottage prayer meetings is in most cases a helpful thing. It is not possible of course to organize an entire community year after year for group prayer meetings, but each year the pastor will find some women in his parish who are willing to open their homes for a brief hour of neighbourhood prayer and invite to these meetings their friends of the immediate neighbourhood. Such a prayer circle exerts an influence out of all proportion to its size and the pastor should by all means establish at least a few of these neighbourhood centers in the parish.

And lastly, the prayer calendar is of help in the *regular worship of the church,* as it is a means by which the pastor by using the general themes or daily topics in the prayer meeting and Sunday services of the church may lead his people in their thought and worship.

XI

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

THE pastor who follows a program of parish evangelism will find that the work of the church from January on to Easter will have usually a climacteric effect, for as one interest is well organized it becomes easier to organize related lines of activities and each strengthens the other. For example, the program of preaching will develop certain lines of religious thinking which will assist in the formation of the pastor's training class and the personal workers' group and will tend to deepen the prayer life of the church. When these three related lines of work are organized they likewise will be of the greatest helpfulness to the program of preaching. When the boys and girls are enrolled in the pastor's training class it will be natural for the pastor to suggest, as one of the requirements of those who are admitted to the class, that they attend the regular morning service of the church if they are not already attendants. Their presence at the morning service will be a very great encouragement to the pastor and his helpers. The pastor will be thinking of ways of reaching these young people through the ministry of the pulpit which will help him in developing his sermons along practical lines.

As the personal workers become active they will help build the church congregation and will invite young people to the training class. As all join to-

gether in service there will be a deepening interest in prayer. As the pastor and his people coöperate in the program of parish evangelism they will feel in many ways the strengthening influence of united prayer. Thus it will surely work out under usual circumstances that each feature of church work will reinforce the others. As the program develops the pastor will find himself and his church growing in interest, in spirituality and in effective service. When Easter draws near he is quite likely to feel the need of a series of devotional meetings which may crystallize the thinking of his people and help them come to new decisions and reach an advanced position in spiritual life. Some pastors find that they need more than a week and use the two weeks preceding Easter for a series of meetings. More and more pastors are coming to the conclusion that the weeks immediately preceding Easter are psychologically favourable to devotional or evangelistic meetings and that through such meetings they accomplish some things which cannot be brought about through the regular Sunday services of the church.

When meetings are held during the week immediately preceding Easter (commonly called "Holy Week"), the life of Christ furnishes the usual theme. There are a number of ways in which to use the material available. Many pastors use the following plan: during the evenings of the week they read the portion of the Scriptures which relates to the events of the corresponding day of Christ's last week. For some days the record is too long for an evening's reading and selections have to be made; for one day

there is no record at all and for this evening some pastors arrange a service of hymns and prayers with a very brief meditation on the value of silence and contemplation in religious life.

Other pastors present brief sermons, the texts usually from the history of the day. Still others, to whom the Christian year does not particularly appeal and who desire to avail themselves of the evangelistic attitude of the people, present devotional or evangelistic themes. But whatever may be the plan, there should be preceding its inauguration a thoroughgoing campaign of publicity. Perhaps at no other time during the year will religious publicity bring as satisfactory results as when devoted to pre-Easter services. The music and other features of service should be appropriate to the occasion. Our modern hymnbooks offer a wealth of material which can be used to great advantage by the pastor who plans ahead for the participation of his people in the worship of the church.

Through such a series of meetings the pastor will be able to give his people instruction in the fundamentals of religious living and will be able to do effective evangelistic work, though he may think best not to advertise the meetings as evangelistic but rather as devotional. He may have found by experience that a meeting advertised as evangelistic is sometimes under a handicap.

Through the devotional meetings during the week preceding Easter he will be able to draw together the various lines of service and if the coördinated features, the pastor's training class, personal work,

definite prayer, have been carried forward in a systematic, painstaking way, and all supported by a thoroughgoing program of preaching, the services of Holy Week will bring great comfort to the souls of the people and a worthy development of the work of the church.

The custom seems to be growing in the churches of various denominations to celebrate the communion on Thursday evening, in memory of Christ's last supper with His disciples, and also to observe the three-hour period on Friday afternoon which corresponds to the period Christ was on the Cross. A number of cities are taking up the movement to make the afternoon of Friday of the week preceding Easter (frequently called "Good Friday") a city-wide holiday for the purpose of allowing the people to attend church if they so desire. In issuing a proclamation for this purpose in Indianapolis the mayor of the city said among other things, "The three hours' passion that our Lord suffered on Calvary that all men from then until the end of time might find eternal life, is the most precious heritage ever left to the human race. Every Christian, of all creeds and all denominations, joins in reverence and thanksgiving for this supreme event. Let us lay aside the everyday working tools of life during the passion hour when Jesus suffered on the Cross." Where there is a community movement of this sort pastors either singly or in groups will have little trouble in securing a congregation.

There are a number of other features of the work in the pre-Easter season which can well receive the

attention of the pastors who are trying to nurture the religious life of the people. For example, devotional reading should be encouraged in every way and pastors can be of very great help to the people by encouraging them to purchase the best books of a devotional nature and to read them. Some of the tried plans are the establishment of reading circles where a small group of people read the same book and meet weekly for discussion, or where the members of a group read a separate book and bring to a weekly meeting a review of the book they have read. But above all else should the pastor encourage his people to read the Scriptures diligently. It is becoming more and more a custom for pastors to urge their people to read at least one of the Gospels during the Lenten period. If the church is following a program of devotions similar to "The Fellowship of Prayer" this feature of work will be of very great interest.

Whether the pastor provides his people with an opportunity for public worship during the days preceding Easter or not, he will of course consider Easter as one of the great days of the Christian year. With some churches the day is made memorable by the reception of new members and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. In other churches it is the custom of the pastor to utilize the occasion for a special sermon, as he will have an opportunity of speaking to people who are not usually at the church service.

As to which is the best type of service no general statement can be made. The pastor and his committee should consider the question carefully and

follow that order of service which they feel will be most helpful to their congregation. It will be necessary for them to consider the custom of the people. To those who have been accustomed through long years to look upon Easter as a communion Sunday, the lack of that feature of the service will be very keenly felt. On the other hand, where the people look forward to the service of instruction and music, such a service should be provided. The reception of members on Easter Sunday can be a very effective service and need not occupy much time nor bring about any confusion. Whereas churches which desire to devote an entire morning service to a reception of members and a discussion of the meaning of church membership, will find that a reception service is more fittingly observed on another day.

To make the most of the year's work, to gather up all the elements of spiritual power that have been stimulated in the lives of the people and to unify the church as a spiritual organization, the pastor should by all means bring his people together for a series of devotional services during Holy Week and plan for a glorious hour of worship on Easter Sunday. The reception of new members at the Easter service, or at some convenient date near Easter, brings to a completion the second cycle of church work—the January-to-Easter period.

The ingathering at Easter is a fitting way to register the results of the work of the church. If the program of parish evangelism has been carried through in effective fashion, the Easter service will record the spiritual results of the season's activities. It is

evident that the items of the program which have been discussed above are not dependent entirely one upon the other, and there may be some churches where one feature can be used, and in other churches, other features. In addition to the individual worth of these various phases of the program, they are of value in their cumulative effect. By carrying through the pre-Lenten program, the pastor will have accomplished these definite results:

He will have developed in the thinking of his people through his pre-Easter sermons, clearer conceptions of God and of the Gospel of Christ for the individual and for the world.

He will have trained and given exercise to a group of church workers, and it will be found that these workers will be drawing closer to Christ as they serve with the pastor day by day.

He will have gone over the fundamentals of Christian faith with the boys and girls of his parish and will have secured the assent of many to unite with the church and to enter the Christian life.

He will have unified his people in prayer and will have made available the resources of spiritual power in the life of the church.

And finally, through his Holy Week and Easter services, he will have demonstrated the essential oneness of the Church and that if the people and pastor are united in a great program and are willing to put into it the best of their lives, they will experience a deepening of their love for Christ; they will be made conscious of the leadership of the Spirit and they will find their hearts made glad by the seal of approval that will be placed upon the worship and service of the church.

XII

AFTER EASTER

AFTER Easter there is usually a decided let-down in church work. This should be on the surface only, for this period should be devoted to what military leaders call "consolidation of gains." The term simply means that when an army has advanced and established outposts by charge or other manœuvre there must be a period of surface quiet that the outposts may be linked up with the main body of the army, channels of communication established and one outpost connected with another. In the work of the church the consolidation of gains is no less important than in military life. The permanency of the work done during the Lenten period depends quite largely upon the effectiveness of that following Easter. If the new members who are brought into the church and others who have experienced a deepening of religious life are not given special care and new opportunities for service, much of the influence of the work will be lost.

Some commercial and business organizations are putting into practice one of the very effective features of the work of the early church, that is the establishment of the chain method of interesting new members. Various city chambers of commerce, for instance, have adopted the plan that when a new mem-

ber has been secured for the chamber he is forthwith commissioned to secure another new member. He is listed as a "front-line man" until he has secured his new member, when he becomes a member of the main body and the new man he has secured takes his place in the front line until he likewise secures his new member. Many will recall reading how the early church had a plan like this, that the young convert to the church was received on probation until he brought some one to the Christian community, when he became a full member and his friend became a probationer until he likewise brought in his member. One of the best forms of service for new members is for them to seek to interest others. Pastors who use new members in this fashion aim to limit their activity to bringing their friends into the congregation, rather than to have the new members engage in more general personal work.

The reception of new members brings to the pastor the task of building the new people into the life of the church. To do this he will want above everything else to make his new members feel at home in the church, and in its services find some worthy task to do. Here he will find his social service, missionary education and religious education programs of great value. To put the right person at work at the right task is one of the marks of true leadership. If a pastor can do this easily he will find his work greatly simplified. The following suggestions, prepared by Rev. Charles E. Burton, D. D., have been used by many churches with good results:

A certificate of church membership should be given

to every new member. With it there should go simple instructions for the personal religious life, an outline of the opportunities and responsibilities of church membership and an invitation to subscribe to the church and its benevolences. Do not be afraid of making religion sordid by introducing finances. If you leave them out you are likely to dwarf the spiritual life of the new member.

Social connections are important. Plan a reception to new members within a week after they are received. Make it an actual introduction of the new members to the church people. Do not stop here. Definitely arrange for intimate acquaintance on the part of every new member with a circle of church people. Here is where your parish organization is of importance.

Watch over the new members faithfully until they are thoroughly inducted into the life of the church. If they are absent from the Sunday service, call them up on the 'phone the next morning, or write them, or call a neighbouring member of the church asking them to inquire; or, best of all, call upon them personally on Monday, letting them know that you missed them. Here again the parish organization is most useful. In the larger churches committees should be set to attend to this, with or without the pastor's coöperation.

Assign some responsibility to every new member. Each one should be introduced to the department of church life which is appropriate—the women to the women's organizations, the young people to the young people's organizations, etc. Usually there is

need of helpers in the Sunday-school. In many churches the choir needs new material. Every pastor knows what needs to be done in the church and through the church in the community. Church members who are doing something worth while for the church will not lose their interest in it.

Other ways of enlisting new members will suggest themselves to the ingenious pastor. The important thing is that it should not be allowed to go unattended to for the lack of plan.

Continuation of Evangelistic Campaign

Many pastors are finding it of great service to continue a quiet campaign for church members after Easter, looking forward to a reception of new members on Mother's Day, Children's Sunday, or on some Sunday in May or June. There are always some who, though willing, cannot be present at the reception at Easter or near Easter and others who made the decision too late to be received. For those pastors who conduct their pastor's training classes after Easter such a reception is a necessity. If the church understands that the work of the church does not end with Easter it will be encouraged to look at the program as an all-the-year-forward movement.

The Absentee

All the denominations suffer great loss each year through the neglect of the absent member. The ideal is for the member to move his church letter along with his other possessions. But in many thousands

of cases this is not done. As a result great numbers are lost to the church each year.

Some pastors try to keep in touch with their absent members and all should do this until these find a home in their new community. It is not to be expected that those absent will continue an interest in the home church unless the home church keeps alive an interest in them. Where pastors have tried to do this by sending copies of all church printed matter and an occasional personal letter, losses are greatly reduced, for those absent continue an interest in their home church until new ties are formed in the new community.

The following suggestions as to reclamation of absentees have been used by many churches to very great advantage. First, every pastor should list with fair accuracy all of his church who are faithful in attendance upon its services and its support.

Study the roll carefully. Make a list of delinquents. Obviously no wide circulation should be given to this list.

Plan definitely some scheme of reënlisting every single individual on that list. Avoid generalities in this particular. Regretting unfaithfulness, yearning for the unfaithful, scolding the faithful about the unfaithful, even praying for the unfaithful, will avail but little. Definite planning for particular efforts to reach a certain person is likely to be effective.

Use your parish organization; that is, let district committees be responsible for definite endeavours for particular persons. Sometimes calls by different parties arranged for by committees is helpful. Per-

sonal invitations to special occasions and regular services should be given repeatedly. Social ties are strong.

Invitations to social affairs given by individual church members where the disinterested become acquainted with active church people are useful. Invitations to social events will not be refused when invitations to church services might be.

Pastoral calls are essential in this connection. Formal calls are better than none, but the pastor should have a plan and a definite aim when he calls upon those estranged from the church. Let him go with a request to which an answer needs to be given. There is some special service which you want them to attend; some particular work you want them to do; some information which they can give. Whatever other pastoral calling has to be omitted do not omit this.

Use the mails in getting the attention of those who have forgotten the church. Write personal letters; get the other members of the church to write; send printed matter. Mail a calendar every Monday to those who do not attend the Sunday services.

Ask aid from the people who are forgetful of the church. Let it be a service by the church to some one else, rather than a service to the church. Ask for money with which to do some disinterested piece of work. Likewise ask for some personal service that is altruistic, though at the same time a real part of the church program.

Too strong emphasis cannot be placed upon the importance of this reclamation work because every

person whose name is upon the church roll, but whose interest is lacking is a stumbling block in the way of the progress of the church.

A number of pastors are carrying forward definite programs of evangelism in the post-Easter period as follows:

1. A second Pastor's Training Class for the training of young people to be received into the church membership on Children's Day with a special recognition service.
2. The continuation of special forms of evangelism with the reception of new members on Mother's Day.
3. The organization and development of an Easter Pentecost campaign with the reception of members on Pentecost Sunday.

These plans are especially available for churches that for one reason or another were not able to join fully in the Easter campaign.

Conclusion

Many subjects that should have been treated in this book have been omitted because of the limitations of space. The ideal, however, has been to present the outlines of a workable program of church activities from which each pastor will select those which fit in best with the needs and opportunities of his parish. Every church must have some program for enlistment. Upon those pastors who plan their programs and carry them through rests in a large degree the future of the Church of God.

Appendix

Reprints of some leaflets used by churches in their evangelistic progress

WHY THE CHURCH IS OF VALUE TO YOU

The Fellowship Series No. 1

The chief end of living is that we may acquire a "good character," that our own life may be pure, deep, kindly and calm. Calm with that assurance that comes into one's life when one knows he is accepted of God as His child, not only for the years of this life but also for the long reaches of life eternal.

There are two sources from which we have help in building a strong character, and these two sources are our friends and God.

A true friend is one whose presence lifts your soul. One who can enter into your experiences with sympathy and with entire unselfishness and who can give you words of wisdom, comfort and advice.

The church offers you a rare opportunity to make and cultivate just such friends. You meet people at church on a foundation of good-will, of mutual confidence and respect. You meet men and women detached for a time from the narrow round of family and business interests. You meet people when they are at their best and you are at your best. You meet men and women when your life and their lives are open and the windows of the soul are unlocked and streams of influence can flow unhampered by the restraints usually

---

Information concerning these leaflets may be secured by addressing The Commission on Evangelism and Devotional Life, Room 518, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

kept upon our lives. Thus you have the opportunity to make good friends and to deepen your friendship with people you have merely known before.

No man can stand without friends. "Any man is as strong as his friendships." The church is your one best opportunity to make and keep friends with good people who want to help you and to be friends with you. Any man or woman you meet at church who hesitates to be your friend, or to be the friend of any other aspiring person, has no business to be at the church until he has come to a new attitude towards others. Be friendly and make friends and they will make you happy.

A man's strength of character depends upon his relationship to God.

No man can be as strong as he ought to be until he has found the source of all spiritual life and has strengthened himself with the power of God. At church we are taught about God. We gain knowledge of Him and of His ways with men. Of His laws and of His provision for our needs and of how we can secure for ourselves the resources of strength He has for all those who do His Will.

At church we learn to know God. Not only about Him but to know Him. This knowledge we acquire through worship. When we pray, or sing, or think about God, we open the little windows of our own souls and wherever we open to Him His Spirit enters in and abides with us. We feel His presence. We have that same feeling of nearness as we have when we sit beside a friend. No word may be spoken but we know our friend is there and is thinking of us and his being goes out to our own being in the mysterious channels of spiritual communication. So worship and devotion draw us near to God and this is the way of knowledge of Him.

The church gives us this opportunity. We can meet God anywhere, any time we lift our thoughts to Him.

But in the church there is far more to cause us to lift our thoughts and our very lives to Him—the worshiping people, the music, the words and environment all help us to turn from our own thoughts towards God. And God meets us and gives to us the things we most need for our own life and strength.

These things help us to build good character. We are far more the architects of our lives than we think. We have the precious jewel in our possession to do with as we will. We need to have a quiet time to look into our own souls and see what we are building. This quiet time the church gives. We need to have the secret springs of our lives refreshed, our wills strengthened, our motives purified and our hearts warmed. The church offers us an opportunity to do these things.

The church helps every man who is faithful to it. It gives him the opportunity to strengthen his own soul and to build a character that will stand in this life and be worthy of the life to come.

WHAT THE CHURCH SHOULD DO FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Fellowship Series No. 2

The church is a group of friendly people deeply interested in each other's welfare and keenly alive to the needs of the community. Its first duty is to train its members in friendly ways of living and then to reach out in every possible way to help the general life of all the community about it. It is a place where friendships are kindled. It offers to the men and women and to the children the opportunity to make lasting friends. A friendly church at the center of a community should make a friendly community. A community where neighbors are "good neighbors." A community in which it is a pleasure to live.

The church is the center towards which any troubled person will naturally turn for comfort. Any bewildered person will look for guidance and any lonely person will look for companionship. The church should be to the community what the heart is to the body—the center and power of its life.

The church should offer the children of the community instruction in the way of life. Here they should learn the cardinal virtues of manhood and womanhood. Here they should have "good times" and be taught that innocent pleasures are best and that they do not leave any bad after effect. It should teach the children the truth about life, and sin, and righteousness. It should introduce them to Jesus Christ whom they would come to know as their "Best Friend." This it should do for the children of the community and much more the church will do for those who enter fully into its life and work.

The church should have a care for each of its members. It must look after its people as a "Good Shep-

herd." It must care for them in sickness and in trouble. It must be near them in peril and in sorrow. It must give instruction in spiritual things and teach plainly the laws of life. Its doctrines must be true doctrines. Not fashioned out of some man's mind to harmonize various portions of Sacred History, but the doctrine of the Church of the Living God must be in keeping with the Spirit of God and true to the teachings of Christ. Pride of opinion or satisfaction in a neat plan of salvation wherein every part is fitted together should have no place in the Living Church set to perpetuate the spirit and teachings of a Living Lord.

Therefore the church must offer the community a progressive leadership. A leadership that welcomes all new truth as God sees fit to reveal it and shuts not up the heart against the leadings of His Spirit. This spirit of anticipation of new truth and willingness to follow true leadership should be spread abroad throughout the community by the church, and the church should labor that this spirit should enter all fields of knowledge. At its portals new truth should always find a hearty welcome and truth seekers of every kind find here a hospitality which will encourage them to go forth restrengthened to "think God's thoughts after Him" and find more of His laws for the blessing of all men.

The church should be keenly alive to every need of the community. All good causes which have for their aim unselfish service should find support here. It is not necessary in these days for the church to build all hospitals and schools and benevolent homes. But all these sprang from the church in ages gone by. They are her children every one of them and she must have a mother's care for their welfare. The church must inspire its members to go into the community and view its needs and then to set about in the spirit of the Master to meet those needs. The church must back the schools and hospitals and social agencies and encourage them in every possible way. And this service is not

limited to the physical limits of the town for we are all of one kindred and our responsibilities reach to the last man or woman or little child in all the world.

Therefore the church must be the channel whereby men and women of goodwill work their good impulses into action for those far away. The church must support missions and philanthropies at home and abroad. To be the means of helping men and women meet these far away needs is one of the main duties of the church to the people of every community. With your help the church can better meet these needs.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THIS CHURCH SERVE THIS COMMUNITY

The Fellowship Series No. 3

How you can help? In every proposition we come back to YOU! You are the center of our thought. You are the reason we have a church. You are the one we are interested in and desire to help. You are the one who can help us. We long for you, we need you and you are the one God needs. You are the one Christ came to lead into the larger, the eternal life. Without you our church will not be complete. With you we can do all things through Christ who strengthened us. For you a place is left and it can be filled by no one else but you. Now what will you do?

You can come to the church services and bring your own best personality with you. Your best self. Your true self. God never intended that you should be anything but your best self. You may have fallen into the habit of not being your best self all the time. But you know when you have done your best, when you have been your best. No one needs to tell you. You have down deep in your life a feeling that that is worthy and you also have a desire that you might be that kind of a person and do that sort of things all the time. Now that is the sort of person you can bring to church.

You can come eager to learn. You can put aside your prejudices and the things you hold on to because you fear to look the truth in the face. You can have the open mind of a child, not only a willingness but an eagerness to know more truth. This will make you a welcome member of the congregation. Your pastor will feel at once the inspiration of your open mind and willing heart. He can tell if your mind is open. There is nothing that can help him more than to know there are

some men and women with eager, open minds to know what God has put into his heart to say. That sort of help will make good preaching, fine and helpful preaching, and that is one of the things your community and every community needs.

You can help your church to be a worshipful church and that is another thing your community and every community needs. People need to have the strength and guidance of the Divine in their lives and this will never come to them until they learn the art of fruitful worship and effective prayer. You can learn this yourself and by practice you can help others to learn the way to the Father's heart.

You can be friendly. Of course you know this is not always easy. You have tried it sometimes and your efforts have availed nothing. You are not responsible for results, but you are responsible for the efforts you make or fail to make. But how do you know you failed? Maybe long years ahead you will find that your efforts to be a friend have been the best investment you ever made. Time alone will tell. Being friendly is hard. It is one of the hardest things we have to learn in the long years of this life. Unless you do learn it you have missed the great opportunity of life. For no one is able to live this life fully nor to look forward to the life to come hopefully until he has learned the lesson of friendliness.

The church is the great school for friendships. You can help make it the right kind of a school. Upon you depends what kind of a school of friendship it will be. Here you can make your life count and you can help this church to be the right kind of a church by enriching the fellowship of the people one for another and by strengthening its friendly relation to those not within its membership.

You can help this church to be what it ought to be in this community by carrying out into daily life its spirit and its teachings. You can work in its Sunday

School and help the boys and girls learn true lessons of life. You can visit among the sick and needy, you can support the hospitals and benevolent homes, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. You can give to the missions of the church. You can invite new residents to go with you to church and meet the people and help them to feel at home.

With your help this church can be the sort of church this community needs. We need your help. We need your friendship. WE NEED YOU!

WHAT THIS CHURCH OFFERS YOU

The Fellowship Series No. 4

This church offers you an opportunity to be your own best self. It gives you the chance to learn truth, to be friendly, to do good. It asks you in return to try to be your best self and to assume your fair share in the work of the church and in the community. It offers you the opportunity to be unselfish, and you need this. Every one does. It is easy to think as did the ancients that a devil rules the world, so insistently does our common life force upon each one of us self-protection and self-interest. But this is not the sort of life we were intended to live. We were not created just to amass material things, to build houses and stores and do over and over again the needed tasks of every day life. That is the sort of life the birds live. The child of God has these duties along with other creations of the Almighty, but he was endowed with a whole range of higher powers and greater possibilities. You were made for friendship, for helpfulness, for companionship, and these belong to your best self. The church offers you a place where these things will be appreciated, where you can indulge your best motives with confidence and your best instincts with assurance.

The church offers you friends. True, unselfish friends who will meet you more than half way and who will stay by you and with you through all the experiences of life. That is what you need and you can have them if you will but be your best self.

The church offers your children an opportunity to learn of the best things of life. How to be good men and women. You want them to know this and learn to practice the fine arts of true living. It offers them knowledge of the Bible—the Book of Life; of God—the Source of Life; and of Jesus—the Leader of Life.

These things you want them to have. They cannot have them unless you help the church to give them these things.

This church offers you instruction in the ways of God. His word will be read to you, and wise and safe expositions will be offered you. No hard and fast systems of doctrine will be given you but you will be encouraged to seek and to find for yourself what is God's message for your own individual life. You will hear frank testimony of the way God deals with others and you will be helped to make your own contribution to the ever expanding truth of God and of Man and of the way of Life.

This church offers you a chance to look into your own soul. A chance to see if you are harboring unhealthy thoughts and evil desires and will give you strength to pluck these things out of the garden of your life, that the beneficent motives and impulses planted there by an all-wise Father may come to full fruition.

This church offers you an opportunity to know what this community needs and why. Many appeals will be made to you and you do not always know which are the most needed. This church seeks to know the work of all beneficent organizations and to advise you which need your help and how you can best give it. This church wants to be the center of good feeling and friendly action in this community. It needs you to help. You can bring knowledge of need, you can be the messenger of hope and good cheer in its name. You can be its representative in your neighborhood and aid it in its work of strengthening the bodies of men, enlightening their minds and warming their hearts. This is the kind of work you long to do. This church will help you do it and to do it in the best way.

This church offers you an opportunity to share in the great work of Christianizing the world. This church belongs to a great brotherhood of churches. This brotherhood has great boards and societies which work

in its name in all the dark places of the world. There are thousands of men and women working in lands far away and near at home whose support depends upon this church and others like it. They are doing the kind of work you would like to do if you were in their places. You have an opportunity to help support these missions and thus carry your influence and goodwill to all the world.

Surely you cannot turn away from these opportunities!

WHY ASK PEOPLE TO JOIN THE CHURCH?

(Type of Membership Enlistment Literature used in this Program)

First: Because every man and woman needs what the Church has to offer in instruction, worship and fellowship.

The Church is the school of God. Vital instruction is given continually to young and old, by sermon, Bible reading and informal teaching concerning the meaning and value of life. To live a good life, people must know what is good, and how shall they know unless they be taught?

The human soul "seeks communion with the divine in worship." Without the refreshment of the soul, life grows hard and drab. With the renewal of the spirit, which comes only through worship, we *feel* the presence of God and understand more fully His will for each one of us.

Without fellowship human life is lonely, fearful and far below its best. Through fellowship the strength of each one is multiplied by the strength of all, the channel of life is deepened and the current is increased. Life becomes warm and friendly and the spirit of the Kingdom comes into the hearts of men.

Second: The community needs a strong religious body at its center which will give tone as well as direction to the stream of community being.

There must be some spiritual center of life. Just as the individual to be his best must have a quickened soul, so must the community, which is but the individual writ large, have its spiritual being inspired and refreshed by a vital spiritual force at its center. From such a spring of vital force flow many streams of bene-

ficent influence which find their way—often unseen—into every relation and element of community living. That the community may have a soul, the church must be active, a power house of spiritual force. This the church can do only when men and women of spiritual power unite their lives in one great fellowship for unselfish living. A man lives far below his best who withholds from his community what he can freely give by uniting in the worship and service of the Christian Church.

Third: The world most grievously needs the uplift and leadership of the Church of Christ.

Force has done its best, or worst, to make the world a better place to live in. Science and industry and wealth have all had their day in court. Diplomacy, "the game of kings," has been played with nations as pawns, and half the world is hungry and weary and fearful. The cry of children and the sighs of widows are continually in our ears, and our souls are burdened with the wreck of nations and the downfall of morals and the slow decline of ideals. What a world the leaders in politics and industry have made for us and our children!

More wealth, more inventions, more armies, more diplomacy cannot bring peace and happiness to mankind, for these are not the sources from which human blessedness comes. The life of man is a spiritual fact, living is a spiritual experience, and only by spiritual forces can human life be redeemed from fear and greed, envy and evil.

The one *power* in the world to-day which can bring peace and fellowship is the power of God's Spirit. The *instrument* ordained by divine providence is the Church of the living Christ. The effectiveness of the power of the divine for regeneration of the world depends upon the willingness of men everywhere to unite their lives under the leadership of the Spirit of Christ, that

through His Church—pure, powerful, self-forgetful—the nations shall be led to know the will of God and be given strength to be the agency of the divine in bringing to this troubled world of ours the Kingdom of God with all its blessings and its peace.

Never were individuals more anxious to know what is right, never were communities more willing to follow the church's leadership and never were nations more needy for the power of the divine than to-day. What a day in which to preach the Gospel of Christ and to call all men everywhere to unite their lives with their brethren in the Church of Christ, that His Spirit may be made known in the world about us, and the Will of God be done by all mankind!

THE INVITATION COMMITTEE

PURPOSE.—The Invitation Committee is the group selected to invite those not members of the church to unite with it and to join in its worship and service.

NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The number varies with the church, though the usual number is ten per cent of the membership. As the Committee is to work under the direction of the pastor he usually appoints it and in some churches the appointment is ratified by the deacons or by the church.

WHO SHALL BE APPOINTED.—The men and women appointed to this Committee should be sensible, dependable, tactful, persuasive and persistent. They should know something of the art of winning others and should understand the meaning of church membership and the practice of Christian discipleship.

TERM OF SERVICE.—The Committee may be permanent but for best results pastors usually appoint the Committee for a limited term, a month or two weeks, or for whatever period the special effort shall be made.

NATURE OF THE SERVICE.—As the period of active work is only one or two weeks, each member ought to make this his main work and give it his best effort.

The task has two phases, (1) study, prayer and consultation with the pastor and other workers; (2) interviewing prospective members, inviting them into the membership of the church and presenting those who decide to unite with the church to the pastor and deacons.

PREPARATION.—The pastor will usually preach a sermon on the nature and meaning of church membership and the members of the Committee should think and read on this subject. They should review in their own minds what it means to be a Christian and understand why so many nominal Christians are not in the church.

The pastor and his assistants will have prepared lists of prospective members. To this list the members of the Invitation Committee can add names and each one should go over the list and select the names of those most easily reached. Each one should be much in prayer that God will open the way and bless the special work of the church.

Supper Conference.—When the time comes for the special effort it has been found most helpful if the members take supper together (a light supper served at 6:00 or 6:30), followed by a half hour conference and the evening given to visitation. The visitors ofttimes go two by two. The plan most fruitful provides that the Committee meet each evening from Tuesday until Friday. Where this is the plan the following is suggested:

The First Evening.—During the supper time the pastor will lead the Committee in the discussion of Why Join the Church. He will likely use the two leaflets "Why Join the Church" and "Why Ask People to Join the Church" for study material. Questions will be asked and discussed and each member of the Committee will be given two or three "Information Cards" with names of prospective members and by 7:30 or 8:00 o'clock the visiting begins. The members of the Invitation Committee will carry application blanks and other literature concerning the work and service of the church.

The Second Evening.—After the reports, questions and consultations, the second evening may well be given to a consideration of the difficulties encountered by the members of the Committee. Dr. Bosworth's "Some Objections" deals with nine common objections raised for not joining the church. This should be read by every member of the Committee and the pastor will likely draw many helpful suggestions from his own experience. Then follows the evening of visiting.

The Third Evening.—The pastor will lead in the dis-

cussion of the experiences of the previous evening. Each member of the Committee will report briefly and all will be helped by this testimony of success and failure. Then the pastor will usually desire to talk on some of the deeper spiritual values and of effective ways of doing the Lord's work. For this Dr. F. B. Meyer's "Personal Evangelism," and Dr. E. B. Allen's "Men of the Burning Heart," are helpful. After the meeting new names are assigned and the members go about their work.

The Fourth Evening.—This evening may well be given to general discussion of the future work of the church and how to interest the new members in its worship and service to the community. Arrangement should be made for the reception of the new members and their introduction to the church and its activities.

Conclusion.—For general distribution in the parish, Dr. Jefferson's "Building up the Church," and "Why go to Church," and Dr. Lynch's "On Church Going," are valuable. This program of personal evangelism is endorsed by the Federal Council of Churches and is being followed by many churches of various denominations and is the result of the experience of pastors of many churches.

THE FELLOWSHIP CANVASS

ITS NATURE

A call on all members of a local congregation and unchurched residents of the community to talk over the interests of the church and to enlist as many people as possible in its worship and service.

ITS AIMS

To give expression to the spirit of neighborliness.

To emphasize the sense of unity and fellowship in common responsibilities.

To create throughout the parish loyalty to the church.

To present a cordial invitation to attend Church Rally Service.

To secure a church attendance pledge, if this is a part of the church program.

To secure a correct list of all members of the family visited; their church relationship, their spiritual needs, and the names of prospective new members for the church and its organizations.

ITS ORGANIZATION

Need not be elaborate but should be thorough and painstaking. A Chairman or Director should first be chosen by appropriate standing committee of the church. The Director will then select team leaders in the ratio of one to each fifteen or twenty families in the parish. The team leader is responsible for the selection of the members of his team and that each family on his list is visited.

The parish list must be brought down to date, addresses corrected and all new families listed as far as known. The list is then divided among the canvassers, regard being had to geographical location, acquaintance, type of person, etc.

PREPARATION

At least one meeting of the canvassers should be held. In this meeting emphasize the following matters:

1 The large possibilities of the Canvass.
2 The certainty of a welcome on the part of the people.
3 The invitation to Church Rally Service.
4 Canvassers should be instructed how to secure information for parish list.
5 Methods of approach, subjects for discussion, the need of faith in the enterprise as well as of the spirit of unselfishness and good cheer.

The plan should be explained from the pulpit. A circular letter or church bulletin should be sent to every home in the parish a few days before the Fellowship Canvass.

EQUIPMENT

1 Each Canvasser should be provided with a card giving name and address of the family to be visited. This "information card" should have spaces to be filled in by the Canvasser after his visit to the home, giving name of each member of family with information concerning (a) prospective new members by letter, (b) by confession of faith, (c) prospective Sunday school pupils, (d) special needs of the family or individuals in the home.
2 Announcements concerning Church Rally Sunday.
3 Church-going leaflets.

(Write Commission on Evangelism for samples.)

The list of names of prospective members secured by this Canvass is apt to be of far more value than are names obtained in any other way because you not only know where to go for your next new members, but you already have individuals in the church interested in winning those new people to membership.

THE CANVASS

The Canvass may be made on one day, but usually sufficient time (one or two weeks) is allowed that the Canvassers may make the calls assigned them at their convenience.

Churches which have tried the Canvass uniformly testify to its value. In one church 30 declared their purpose to unite; 62 enrolled in the Home Department of the church school; 123 pledged themselves to attend church regularly; 23 to have family prayers; 23 to adopt the practice of proportionate giving, etc.

In another—out of 710 men called upon, 455 signed church attendance cards. In this church over 50 united with the church at the next communion.

This community-wide fellowship canvass is the opening of the year's work and is the beginning of an effective fall program of membership enlistment.

Printed in the United States of America

DAN A. POLING, D.D. *President U. S. C. E.*

An Adventure in Evangelism

A Story of "Twice-Born Men" on "The Avenue." $1.50

It is a strong, fearless, Gospel message, through which men of all grades, merchants and outcasts alike, have been brought to God. It details the plan and method and tells the story of five years growing success, and includes a variety of themes of a most alluring order, all bearing on the central objective of saving souls.

R. A. TORREY, D.D.

Soul-Winning Sermons

A Large Octavo Volume, 484 Pages, Cloth, $4.00

"Thank God for these great soul-stirring sermons. Dr. Torrey has put in their logical order his complete cycle of sermons which have been most used in bringing definite men and women to a definite acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Every sermon is a model of logical thinking, homiletical arrangement, clearness of style and topical analysis."—*Baptist and Reflector.*

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, D.D.

Christ's Soul-Searching Parables

Eangelistic Addresses. $1.50

Dr. Banks' name and fame as a lucid and picturesque writer of inspirational books, has long ago been firmly established. He shows no falling-off in his latest work. From the matchless stories which fell from the lips of Jesus, he draws lessons for the spiritual guidance, enheartenment and consolation of his fellow-believers.

A. EARL KERNAHAN, D.D.

Visitation Evangelism

Its Methods and Results. Introduction by Bishop Edwin H. Hughes. $1.25

"A book of unusual values based, not only on theoretical premises, but on the more practical ground of personal experience. A manual of instruction, and an enheartening record of successful operation."—*Baltimore Southern Methodist.*

CHARLES FORBES TAYLOR

Everlasting Salvation

And other Addresses. $1.00

A series of straight-from-the-shoulder addresses which go straight to the heart of the Christian message, and demonstrate the flaming character of his evangel and the unswerving character of his work. Mr. Taylor faces living issues, employing the Gospel he proclaims as a test of the validity of certain institutions which form an integral part of present-day life.

R. A. TORREY, D.D.

The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power $1.75

"Not long since we were asked to name the best book on the subject of prayer. We feel perfectly safe in saying there is no better, safer and more helpful book than this, and people should read it if they wish something really worth while."—*Herald and Presbyter.*

EDWARD M. BOUNDS, D.D.

Essentials of Prayer

Edited by Homer W. Hodge, D. D. $1.25

"Covers many phases of prayer and in each instance gives one of the most helpful discussions for pastor or layman that this reviewer has yet come across. No one can make a mistake in buying the volume. It ought to be read by thousands."—*Baptist and Reflector.*

A. GORDON MacLENNAN, D.D. (Editor)

Prayers at Bethany Chapel by John Wanamaker

Edited by A. Gordon MacLennan, D. D., Pastor Bethany Presbyterian Church. $1.25

This is a second volume of the same kind of unpretentious and simply-phrased petitions from the great philanthropist brought together by Mr. Wanamaker's pastor."—*Christian Guardian.*

ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D. *A New Edition*

The Acts of the Holy Spirit

An Examination of the Active Mission and Ministry of the Spirit of God, the Divine Paraclete—as set forth in the Acts of the Apostles. $1.00

JAMES H. BROOKES, D.D.

The Mystery of Suffering

A new (sixth) edition from new plates. $1.00

From out of a life devoted to pastoral work, the late Dr. Brookes, a man of tenderest sympathies, wrote this book. He completed it as he neared his end, and it breathes throughout the sweet spirit of the man through the sweeter spirit of his Lord.

10225

The Evangelical School of Theology

DATE DUE

BV 3790 .F28 1926

Fagley, Frederick Louis,
1879-

Parish evangelism

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV3790.F28 1926
Fagley, Frede Parish evangelism :
3 0645 0005 0612 7